

The following deejay snapshots are taken from a 1967 edition of "Beatwave" magazine.  
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# Radio Caroline DJs



Steve Young (South)



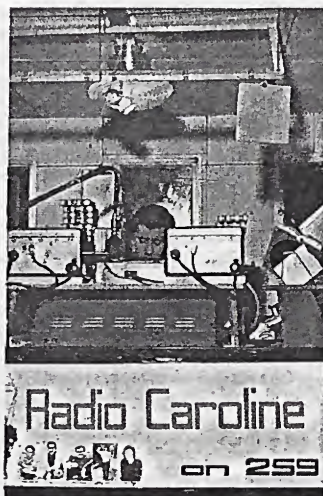
Tommy Vance (South)



Bob Stewart (North)



Jerry Soopa Leighton (North)

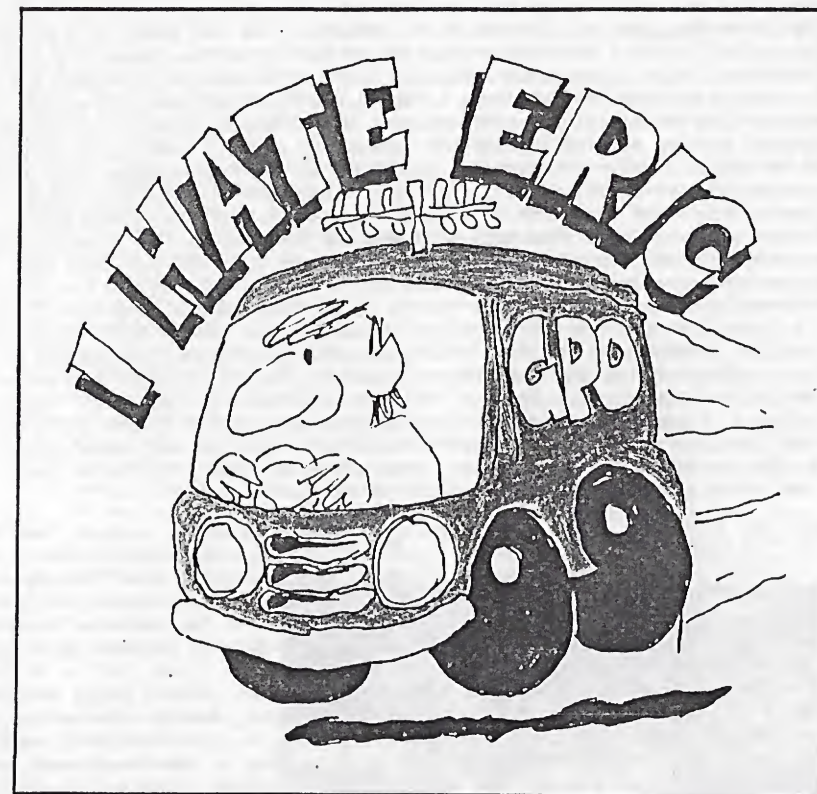


Don Allen (North)



Mike Luvsitt (North)

90p



FREE RADIO WAVES \* 6



Home Secretary Douglas Hurd told the House of Commons on Monday July 1st. that proposals for 21 experimental community radio stations up and down the country were being scrapped because ministers had not found a way of upholding "minimum standards of objectivity and decency" in the planned stations. This suggests that our leading politicians are total brainless imbeciles, as their counterparts in Canada, the U.S.A, France, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, Spain etc. have had no problems working out a practical system of localised, independent commercial radio. The decision to shelve the community radio project, a little less than a year after it was first announced to the House, is unforgivable on a number of counts. Firstly, does the Government have any consideration for the hundreds of would be stations that invested time and money in their initial applications and have since been carrying out various surveys and engineering studies? Does it bother them that people have wasted ill afforded time and money on a massive goose chase? Does it worry them that we are one of the few Western powers with no system of truly local radio? Reasons for Hurd's backdown are pure conjecture but, reading in between the lines, it seems the Conservatives are unhappy with the type of group applying for franchises. The straight jacket regulations made running a station unappealing for any commercial outfit. Names like Tony Prince, Tony Blackburn and Chris Carey all pulled out of the fray because they considered the whole idea to be unworkable. Therefore, the organisations interested in obtaining a license tended to be specialist music outfits or groups with political and/or ethnic interests. Perhaps the Government felt the later were more likely to address sensitive issues like inner city deprivation, mass unemployment, poor race relations, policing etc. thus causing the Conservatives considerable embarrassment in the run up to the next General Election? Please don't think I've got a political axe to grind, I'm no loonie lefty having a cheap dig at Mrs. Thatcher. I just feel the community radio fiasco is typical of the way sound broadcasting has been abused since Mr. Marconi brought his marvellous invention to this country. It's an uncaring, blinkered and downright unfair decision....I just hope a few of the disappointed applicants dust off their transmitters and get back on the air. The word "legal" doesn't mean right in this case, the so-called "anarchy of the airwaves" we enjoyed a couple of years ago is our only hope and weapon for Free Radio in this country!

Okay, now that I've fired my broadside, welcome to another issue of Free Radio Waves. Many thanks for the feedback to FRW 5, our most successful edition to date, and it seems you all enjoyed our fascinating interview with John Kenning about the early days of Laser 558. I'm very gratified that new features like "Skywave" have caused so much interest, we've been trying to lick the magazine into shape over the past couple of months and I think we're gradually succeeding in getting the right balance.

The important news regarding Free Radio Waves is that there's going to be another break in publication as several of our staff are going down to the Mediterranean for a while to work on the Voice of Peace. This is the problem when a bunch of radio people try to run a magazine, it's hard to hang up your headphones and in this case the lure of the sea has just proved too strong! Publication will be resumed on our return, please consult the Anoraks U.K. Weekly Report and Record Mirror for precise details. We apologise for the inconvenience caused, all mail marked for the attention of "Freetec" will still be passed on through the Flagstones address and Anoraks U.K. in Blackpool will continue to stock all back issues of the magazine along with additional copies of FRW 6. Our tape service will be suspended as from July 20th. but we'll accept orders for completion on our return, again via-Sevenoaks.

It's a shame that Waves has to take another break just as we're gaining momentum and picking up new readers. I'm sure you realise an anorak has to do what an anorak has to do!

SIMON PARRY.

FREE RADIO WAVES, FLAGSTONES, WEST HEATH LANE, SEVENOAKS, KENT TN13 1TA.  
Main agents:- ANORAKS U.K., P.O. BOX 539, BLACKPOOL, LANCASHIRE FY1 4RE.



## RADIO IN CANADA

### THE AMERICAN DREAM

In the last part of this enthralling saga I left you sleeping, metaphorically speaking, with Pat Benetar and Elaine Paige. Now I'm afraid it's time to turn our attention to the rather more mundane subject of radio again. Actually, all this schoolboy innuendo wouldn't go down very well with my friends at the Moral Majority. For some strange reason, perhaps I look particularly demonic, born again Christians seem to home in on me. I can be walking down the street, minding my own business, when a whole pack of them pounce and tell me to "repent or be damned". It happened on the plane over and no less than three times on the bus. As soon as you head south from Kentucky into states like Tennessee and Louisiana you feel a distinct change in attitude and the fundamentalist Southern Baptist Church wields a great deal of power and influence. Religion spells big bucks for radio and t.v. and many stations carry media preachers like Jerry Falwell and Jimmy Swaggert. They spend millions of dollars getting their message across and have a vast following. The question I always ask myself, pardon me for being cynical, is how comes all these guys are so rich? Anyway, the gruesome twosome were holding a book signing session in Louisville while I was there but I decided to do something more constructive like watching trees grow. Yee gods, Jez and Jimbo make the Reverend Ian Paisley look like the lead singer in Siegue Siegue Sputnik, these guys are conservative! I usually make it a rule not to talk about religion in this magazine, I have a healthy respect for everyone's beliefs, but some of the crusades launched by the Moral Majority are downright frightening. Falwell went too far even for some of his right wing chums recently when he came out in favour of white supremacy in South Africa and some of his cohorts in West Virginia have managed to get public dancing outlawed. They say it leads to "adultery and underage sex". Personally, I spent half my teenage years bopping around at discos and am most upset I didn't get my share. Normally I'd just laugh that sort of thing off but the fundamentalists have the money to buy large chunks of airtime and saturate the media with their message, it's all rather sinister!

Don't get me wrong, the South is a wonderful place and I've never been met with such hospitality. Try paying for a round of drinks in a town like Nashville and they take it as a personal insult. I also discovered that not all the country's radio stations are super slick and highly commercialised, 500 watt and 1 KW smalltown broadcasting has a distinctly local flavour with some wonderful accents and scant regard for technical standards. What really impressed me is that every area, however small, had at least one station of its own and the inhabitants supported them vigorously. They managed to mix good local coverage with music and general entertainment, it all struck me as the way community radio should be allowed to evolve over here. While staying in Knoxville, Tennessee I came across a remarkable lady called Dr. Ruth Westheimer for the first time (pictured right getting carried away with rock star Ozzy Osbourne). Pint sized Dr. Ruth is of German extraction and survived the horrors of a World War II concentration camp before







coming across to the States. She's a respected psychologist and hosts a live nationwide radio phone-in called "Sexually Speaking" where she answers a whole range of problems. Her main appeal is with younger audiences, we're talking roughly from fifteen to thirty, and what impressed me was her warm, casual approach and no nonsense advice. She's managed to build up a massive cult following, her show certainly makes compulsive listening and she's become a major media personality. She's also dearly loved by morning show presenters who mercilessly extract the michael and come up with some very cruel satires and impersonations. Dr. Ruth also presents a regular programme for the Arts & Entertainment satellite t.v. network and almost single handedly saved them from bankruptcy last year. I seem to remember she was featured once on Jonathan King's "Entertainment U.S.A" and there's talk of her doing something across here in the New Year. Meanwhile, one of her recent phone-ins will feature in a forthcoming American Dream Series 86 cassette. Before we leave the South can

I just urge you to try the food if you're down there. Grits, pecan pie, corn pudding, hush puppies and the like might have ruined the svelte like Clark figure but they're delicious and I'm sure a couple of extra aerobics classes will undo the damage. I would however advise against chitlans which are basically unspeakably naughty parts of a cow's anatomy.

Our next port of call was Eastern Canada where we planned to visit the region's three major cities - Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto. I shall refrain from commenting on the area's climate, suffice to say brass monkeys should take a wide berth, but can vouch for the fact it's a great place with plenty to do and see. The quickest way to fall out with any Canuck is to accuse them of being American. They're very independent of their bigger neighbour and justifiably proud of their own culture and achievements. More importantly, from our point of view, they have a completely different radio system from the United States and I shall do my best to explain all the quirks and peculiarities in the next couple of pages!

The CRTC, the Canadian Radio Television & Telecommunications Commission, are in charge of licensing and regulating all the country's commercial and independent radio/tv stations. Before we go any further, consider these figures:-

CANADA: There are 614 stations for a population of 25 million. That's one for every 41,000 people. Of these, 399 broadcast on AM and 215 on FM.

U.S.A: There are 9,140 stations for a population of 233 million. That's one for every 25,000 people. Of these, 4,685 broadcast on AM and 4,505 on FM.

This of course means, per capita, that Canada has just over half the number of stations Americans enjoy. The figure is topped up considerably when you consider that the majority of Canadians live within a hundred miles of the U.S. border and have access to dozens of their neighbour's stations. Commercial AM licensees are required to have 30 % Canadian content which basically means that a third of all the records they play must be by a Canadian band, written by a Canadian or produced by one. It's a rule that angers many operators, you can imagine how difficult it is for a classical or oldies station to fulfill this requirement. The public relations director at "All Gold" W1310 in Ottawa told me that the Canadian record industry wasn't really producing big hits in the sixties, the period they're trying to cover, and they feel they have to play inferior product to reach their 30 % quota. Because of this, FACTOR was set up a number of years ago and is an umbrella group designed to assist up and coming indigenous talent. It's financed by leading independent stations, such as CHUM Toronto, and gives interest free loans to artists to help them



**CHUM Limited**  
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# FREETEC

Freetec have partially assembled and fully completed transmitters which are designed to cater for both amateur and professional needs. Our engineers have come up with a range of equipment which combines ease of use with high quality construction and reliability. We hope the following information will answer your queries but feel free to contact us if you require any further details or technical advice.

FM BANDMASTER: Freetec's best selling 35 watt transmitter uses all the latest solid state components and its relatively easy operation makes the unit ideal for first-time broadcasters and seasoned operators alike. The t.x. is supplied with detailed instructions and tips on how to obtain peak performance. Here are the technical specifications:-

Power output - 35 watts.

Voltage required - 12 volts at 4 amps (car battery, selected citizen's band power supply units etc).

Frequency range - 88 to 108 Mhz (please state frequency when ordering).

Features:-

- \* The transmitter is fitted with pre-emphasis for hi-fi sound capability.
- \* Reverse polarity protection.
- \* Fine frequency adjustment on the front panel allows the unit to be tuned  $\pm 1.5$  Mhz from the supplied frequency. For instance, a rig ordered on 105 Mhz can be used between 103.5 and 106.5 Mhz and still give full output power without any internal adjustments.

FM BANDMASTER 100 WATT POWER AMPLIFIER: The latest addition to the Freetec catalogue can be used in conjunction with the standard 25 watt Bandmaster to provide an output of 100 watts. The amplifier draws a total of 24 amps and we can also provide a suitable power supply unit to run the equipment. The 100 watt amplifier is ideal for high power applications and is designed to withstand long running periods.

BANDMASTER STEREO ENCODER: This high quality 12 volt unit can be used in conjunction with all the various Freetec transmitters and does not require any internal adjustments.

Freetec also provide the following:-

- 1). 5 watt FM transmitter with pre-emphasis, ready to use. Please state frequency when ordering. The specifications are the same as the FM Bandmaster.
- 2). 5 watt FM transmitter board. The basic rig, un-boxed and without pre-emphasis. Ideal for people with a degree of technical knowledge.
- 3). 35 watt power amplifier for use with either of the above 5 watt units.

- \* All prices include postage and packing to addresses in the British Isles ONLY, unless stated. Quotes for delivery elsewhere are available upon request.
- \* All payment to S.J. Parry please. British customers should send a postal order, cheque or cash in a registered envelope. Foreign customers (in this case including the Republic of Ireland) must send a sterling money order or the full equivalent in their own currency (bank notes only) plus a £ 2 surcharge for exchange fees.
- \* All items delivered within 28 days unless stated. Written confirmation is provided for all orders.

## PRICE LIST:

FM BANDMASTER 35 watt transmitter	£ 85.00
FM BANDMASTER 100 watt power amplifier*	£ 140.00
BANDMASTER STEREO ENCODER*	£ 75.00
Complete 5 watt transmitter	£ 40.00
Un-boxed 5 watt FM transmitter	£ 22.50
Complete 35 watt FM amplifier	£ 50.00
100 watt power supply unit*+	£ 140.00

\* Please allow upto 42 days delivery. +Needs to be sent parcel post or by courier.



record material. As mentioned before, AM stations must specify their format when applying for a franchise and then they're required to submit detailed proposals to the CRTC if they wish to change. Again, many owners are disgruntled by the lack of self-determination and are pressing for more liberal, American style rules. FM stations don't have to adhere to the 30 % Canadian content stipulation, known in the country as "CANCON", but have to negotiate a mutually agreeable figure with the CRTC. They're required to carry at least 12 % "foreground" programming which can consist of old radio shows, documentaries, educational matters etc. Music stations find this a major thorn in the side and it's not uncommon to hear the full quota of foreground material going out in one lump on Sunday nights ! They also have to reach agreement with the CRTC about "spoken word" content which comprises talk, humour, weather, news etc. The Commission has decreed, in its infinite wisdom, that no FM station can play one particular record more than eighteen times in a week. This is obviously designed to keep hard sell top forty radio off the band but many operators, some very blatantly, are flouting this regulation and the CRTC don't seem unduly concerned.

The positive thing about CANCON, apart from actively encouraging homegrown talent, is that it sets Canadian radio apart from its American cousin. Generally, Canadian top forty stations have a far more adventurous playlist and will spin records from unknown and untested groups. There's no way that, say, the New York hit radio market leader WHTZ would play a demo from an unsigned band but in Ottawa top rated CHEZ do just that every couple of hours. Because of this, the Canadian charts are generally more varied and contemporary than the Billboard Hot 100.

The thing that impressed me most about North American radio was the way that relatively small stations on a limited budget could sound wonderfully professional and exciting. There's no over manning, people know how to do their jobs and get on with it. I mentioned CHEZ Ottawa a moment ago, they lead the capital's CHR market and are tucked away on the fourth floor of a very modest city centre office building. Inside there's a sense of calm, there are only a dozen people working at any given time but everything runs like clockwork. Compare this with Capital where there are literally hundreds of staff milling around and 194's output sounds slipshod by comparison. It was also refreshing to see a liberal playlist, CHEZ certainly have a cohesive overall sound but the deejays have plenty of creative freedom. They still programme everything off vinyl, rare in cartridge obsessed North America, but plans are afoot to phase in broadcast specification compact disc players. The latest C.D. models have instantaneous start-up time and are completely impossible to "whirr" in ! CHEZ's audio quality is faultless but the chief engineer told me much of the equipment wouldn't match up to IBA specifications. The secret lies in the station's rack of processing gear, 75 % of which can't be used for an assortment of daft reasons in this country.



Montreal is a fascinating place and one of the few truly bi-lingual cities in the world. I'd estimate that about 70 % of the population speak French as their first language and this is reflected in the area's radio. CHOM FM are one of the few stations to cater for both audiences, they even have one presenter that changes mid-sentence from French to English and their slogan, "L'esprit de Montreal", is also distinctly Gallic. Four hundred miles down the road we find Toronto, a very modern Americanised city nestling on the shore of Lake Ontario. It's also Canada's most important radio market and the home of the country's blossoming music industry. The skyline is dominated by the 1,815 foot high C.N. Tower which houses dozens of transmitters and even a remote CFNY studio on the top observation deck ! Toronto is also home to the famous CHUM who operate separate services on 1050 khz AM and 101 Mhz FM. Their headquarters are on Toronto's main thoroughfare, Yonge Street, and to be honest look slightly seedy. The exterior might not have had a lick of paint since the sixties but inside all the gear is hi-tech and the place is buzzing with activity. Both stations have separate studio facilities within the building and are actively competing with each other, although the advertising team does offer a number of joint package deals. When I was there AM had a punchy, somewhat old fashioned top forty format with butch personality jocks and plenty of snappy jingles (nirvana !). 101 used to have a mainly adult album playlist but this has gradually become more commercial as medium wave radio has gone into decline. The presenters all use technical operators, t.o's often go on to become deejays themselves, and the bulk of the playlist is pre-recorded onto cartridge. I spoke to CHUM promotions man Warren Cossford about the station's fortunes;

Q: How are CHUM doing generally ?

A: Overall very well but we do have one or two slight worries about the future. CHUM FM is probably Canada's leading pop orientated station and heads that particular market here in Toronto. CHUM AM is still popular but has slid down the ratings a little in recent months, the main problem is that AM in general has been declining in North America. For instance, we just got the latest figures from San Francisco and KFRC, a station that used to be near the top of the list, has slid from about third to sixteenth ! The trouble is what happens in the United States eventually happens here a few years later. From what I understand hi-fi equipment is generally cheaper in Canada than in Europe, people have access to good radios and they want the best possible quality. AM stereo has certainly helped to slow down the slide but it can never technically be as good as FM and I think you'll find more and more AM stations will switch over to a predominantly talk format. Music radio is going to have to move across to FM.

Q: Does this mean CHUM AM will follow the other legendary sixties rocker WABC New York and become an all news station ?

A: No, not for the foreseeable future and even if we did change I don't think we'd do news. I can see a time when CHUM AM is perhaps forced to do something different but we're talking about a few years yet.

Q: We've explained to our readers about "foreground" programming and the like, do you resent having to put those kinds of show on the air ?

A: Well, we'd probably have a certain amount of foreground programming even if the CRTC didn't require it. Personally, and I stress I'm talking for myself, I don't like the fact we're told to do it and could have our license revoked if we didn't. The quality of documentaries and the like here is very good, our production team recently picked up a prize for one of their shows and we're proud of our achievements in that field. No, it's the lack of self-determination that annoys me.

Q: What about the "CANCON" regulation ?

A: Again, I'd much rather not be told that we had to play 30 % Canadian material on AM. There was a time when the Canadian music industry was in a poor state and we found it difficult to find enough decent material to playlist but now it has really come of age. I think the Canadian Band Aid song, "Tears Are Not Enough" by Northern Lights, brought





CHUM-AM's (1050) switchboard was flooded with hundreds of calls yesterday from listeners voting 3-to-1 in favor of the station's format change.

Operations manager Jim Waters said callers ranged in age from 12 to 50, with older listeners generally supporting CHUM's four-day-old replacement of teenage hits with rock oldies and new pop favorites.

Only one person, a 32-year-old woman, mentioned new morning disc jockey Don Percy favorably by name, while many angry fans wondered what became of John Major. Waters said Major's role with CHUM is still undecided.

Among the responses:

□ A 21-year-old man and a 35-year-old woman liked the new sound, but thought CHUM needed more uptempo music from the 1970s.

□ A 14-year-old girl preferred the station's new mixture of oldies and current songs to the defunct format of up-to-the-minute hits.

□ A 47-year-old man approved of the change, because "it's about time CHUM grew up."

□ An irate 15-year-old girl planned to circulate a petition to bring back the old CHUM, whose format was changed Friday at 3 p.m.

The first true reflection of CHUM's decision will come with the BBM Bureau of Measurement ratings in August. The next survey, to be released Thursday, was conducted too early to gauge last weekend's move.

□

necessary though as I've heard some funny stories about your broadcasting set up. We think we're hard done by compared to the Americans with the smaller number of stations we have in Canada but you've only got a handful of choices. I was quite amazed and flattered when you told me earlier that tapes of us, WHTZ and WPLJ have been known to circulate around the British commercial stations. I hope they're of some use !

Thanks to Warren for finding time in his busy schedule to give us a guided tour of the CHUM set up and to deejay Bill Magee who let me ruin his programme - Bill turned out to be the deejay I spoke to seven years ago when I phoned CHUM after hearing them this side of the Atlantic on 1050 khz, he recorded the call and put it on the air. I still have the tape to this day ! I think that should give you a fair perspective of what commercial radio in Canada is like, to get an idea of the variety and number of stations available check out Free Radio Waves 5. As an interesting footnote to our interview, scrutinize the above newspaper cutting. Warren hinted at a change and it certainly came sooner than I expected !

The backbone of the country's radio system is the CBC - The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This is designated by law as "the national broadcasting service" and the corporation has a number of special responsibilities outlined by the Government. The CBC itself owns and operates stations, transmitters and programme production centres throughout Canada - a total of more than 900 outlets. In addition, nearly 400 privately-owned or community-owned stations and transmitters are associated with the CBC as affiliates of its national radio and television networks. The whole lot is mainly financed by public funds voted annually by Parliament. The figure varies but

home to the public just how much talent there is here. You had people like Anne Murray, Neil Young, Gordon Lightfoot and Bryan Adams all on the same stage. Add to that Corey Hart, Platinum Blonde, Rush and countless others and you have a pretty good line up for a country with only 25 million people.

Q: Tell us about FACTOR ?

A: FACTOR was set up a few years ago, partially to benefit radio industry I must admit, with the intention of helping young and up and coming homegrown bands. A number of leading stations donate money to it, the yearly budget is C\$ 5 million (aprox. £ 2.5 million) and it gives interest free loans to cover recording and promotion. We're already seeing positive results.

Q: Do you feel the Canadian Government will one day deregulate broadcasting ?

A: I don't think so, they'll always be after public accountability from stations and the CRTC are going to want the final say in what goes on. I can see the regulations being relaxed, certainly FM services will have to have more flexibility and CANCON might well be scrapped or modified. Maybe stations will come to voluntary agreement about the amount of Canadian music they play.

Q: Do you hear much about radio in Britain ?

A: Yes, we read about it in trade magazines like Billboard and Radio & Records, quite a few people like yourself drop by. I'm friendly with a deejay at Chiltern Radio, he popped in a couple of years ago and I'm going to stay with him in Bedfordshire. We were all quite fascinated by Laser, the management even phoned us one day looking for a girl who'd worked here once. I don't think she ever went out to the boat though. I was suprised when you talked about how they'd closed last year. We got the impression from reports over here that everything was going really well and they were making a lot of money. I can't help finding the whole idea of offshore radio bizarre, I understand that it's

is normally in excess of C\$ 460 million (£ 230 million) and additional revenue comes from commercial television advertising. CBC radio is almost completely non-commercial. They also operate a major foreign service, no doubt familiar to all DX'ers, called Radio Canada International. This has its headquarters in Montreal with transmitters at Sackville, New Brunswick.

We'll be back with more of our travels in Free Radio Waves 7. Next time we plan to take a special look at California and San Francisco in particular.

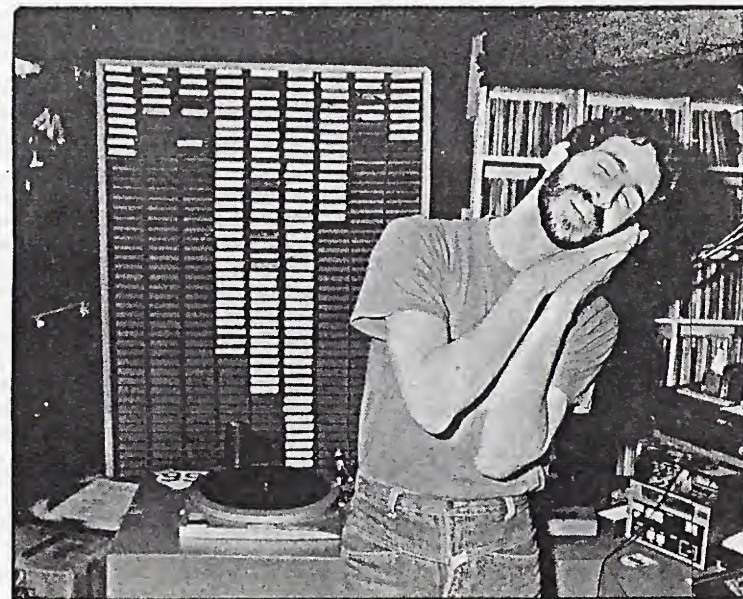
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## CHARLIE WOLFE

We get a lot of requests for interviews with well known personalities, some poor misguided fool even asked us to quiz "Diddie" David Hamilton about his illustrious career. I remember the note well because the writing was so poor, then again it can't be easy putting together a letter if you're straight-jacketed and heavily sedated in a padded cell - that's what you get for listening to Radio 2 ! No, one name that crops up all the time is Laser 558 mainstay Charlie Wolfe. Chaz is one of those lovable loonies, a true eccentric of the ether, that the general public warms to. Since leaving the Communicator a few months before the crippled ship put into port Charlie has freelanced for a number of ILR stations and his most recent home has been Radio Mercury, the Crawley based ILR outfit. I'm sure most of you still want to know about Charlie's exploits at sea and, you know us, we never fail to deliver. Get ready to reach fever pitch as FRW correspondent Bill Smith poses the questions;

Bill:- How did you get involved with the Laser project ?

Charlie:- The first time I heard about it I was looking for a job, this is in Salt Lake City, and was checking the trade magazine "Radio & Records". There was a piece about Laser in it one day and I said to my friend, "what the heck's this ?". Well, I had a spare cassette and thought I might as well send it off. So I bunged out a tape to these people along with about fourteen other stations and didn't really think any more about it, it was the last priority on my list. Two weeks later there was a phone call from New York and they wanted me to go work for them. I said I'd think about it, talked to my friends and family and they said, "yeah ! go see Europe !", I was going to go do it when I talked to my boss who was familiar with the people who were involved with the project such as Roy Lindau. He remembered him from his association with the relaunching of Radio Caroline and he said "stay away from them, they're bad news". I looked into the set-up, didn't like one or two things I saw and nearly decided to turn down the offer. In the end I got so fed up with the situation in Utah that I phoned and said, "Okay, I'm on !". A week later I was on the high seas. My trip out to the boat





wasn't all that bad, I slept most of the way. I went out at about 2.00 am with Rick Harris and dozed off an hour later. I woke up at around six, it was a beautiful morning and there on the horizon was the boat. I wouldn't say it was inspirational but it was an interesting experience sitting there looking at this tug boat and sizing it up.

Bill:- How different was it all from working on a normal landbased station ?

Charlie:- Totally different. There were a lot of things I liked, I had the freedom I wanted even though I had to follow a format. I'd come from a professional background where I was used to formats but here I could improvise a lot more which I obviously used to my advantage, as you know ! There were a lot of things I had to get used to like dealing with generators and records being off speed. It was nice to have a porthole in the studio, I mean I had a permanent spitoon. There were a lot of differences, you had to get more into your own mind, a lot more into fantasy and that kind of thing really helped me out. It certainly improved my creativity because I had to rely on myself. I didn't have the day's newspapers, I didn't have the opportunity to go out and talk to people or relate to my surroundings. I couldn't go down to the local cinema or something. Generally it had a lot of positive effects on my presentation.

Bill:- There were a lot of little features on your show like "Who's Afraid Of The Big Bad Wolf" which you used to start things off with. Where did you get most of those bits and pieces from ?

Charlie:- A lot of it was records from the States, I'd buy them when I was on holiday and some of it was the L.A. Airforce material which is very popular for disc jockeys. I took some stuff with me originally from the States but a lot of it developed while I was here. I can't take all the credit though, a few items came from a comedy service for deejays and were inspired by a double act called Stevens & Grundnick. They came up with the commercials for Rope On A Stick, the Spacelab one and a spoof advert for Farrah beer.

Bill:- I think many people remember your strongly worded announcement hitting out against heroin. Can you tell us a little more ?

Charlie:- I was very serious about that. I got on shore one day and I got a call from a friend and he said, "Steve Wright wants to talk to you !". I thought, "wow, THE Steve Wright", so I got his number and call him up and the first thing he says to me is "that heroin announcement is the funniest darn thing I've ever heard" and I'm going "oh no, it was meant to be serious !". I have a wacky time but I take my job very seriously and I feel that I have a responsibility to my audience whether it be on Laser or ILR. Being wacky is part of that responsibility, there are shut ins that want to be entertained and need a friend and you've probably noticed that I don't just play music, I try to give everyone a little bit extra. I hope to have kids of my own one day and I wanted to communicate with young people about something that was really important - heroin kills !

Bill:- What about the "fever pitching". Did you do this before you got to Laser ?

Charlie:- I developed it at Laser. I was looking through the dictionary trying to find a term to use on the air and I stumbled across "fever pitch", used it on the air one day and thought no more about it. Then people started writing to me and mentioning it and I developed it from there, it's been really good for me. Then there was Chipping Sodbury Sound. They started during my contract negotiations and the whole thing was a giant fantasy. One part of the negotiating process is when you get a counter offer from someone and that makes you a valuable property ! So I needed a counter offer. I thought of using the worst commercial radio station which has to be Invicta but Andy, our engineer, suggested I make one up and he mentioned this place called Chipping Sodbury. I took it from there, a friend of mine made up some jingles for me and the whole scam gained momentum.

Bill:- What about the spoof satellite links you did ? It really sounded like you were doing programmes for Chipping Sodbury Sound...

Charlie:- Part of fantasy is reality, you know, or to make it sound like it's real and I'm very interested in the way things come over. It's an attention to detail, silly little things, it's a bit like acting. The Janitor spoof was a pisstake of Channel Four. They'd close down and come back a minute later with this announcement saying, "Don't forget to switch off your sets", which I thought was real stupid.

I decided that Bill the janitor wouldn't ask people to switch off their radios, he'd ORDER them and he came on with this gruff voice behaving in a very conservative, redneck way. I even used him on Radio Orwell.

Bill:- Tommy Rivers told me it was difficult to get on with you at first because of the way you did your programmes. I know you had to tone things down slightly but how did you manage to get round Tommy's restrictions ?

Charlie:- I just ignored him ! It was tough because Tommy was in the position where he had to follow instructions from New York but we sorted things out. There were one or two bones of contention such as "The Three Loaves Of Bread Show". Basically, we got a tender one day and it was really low on supplies. Particularly bread, there were just three loaves on board, and I must admit I was getting a little fed up, so I voiced my opinion in a way that the management couldn't ignore. I snapped, it had been a long haul and I was getting to the end of my tolerance level. I think I was showing it there ! It seemed hard at the time but I look back on it and maybe it wasn't so bad. It wasn't horrendous or anything, I mean I'm still alive to talk about it !

Bill:- We're all very sad that Laser is still off the air. Do you reckon it'll come back ?

Charlie:- I think we've heard the last of Laser, even if the boat does go out again I think it'll broadcast as something different. I mean Laser was changing anyway, all the staff who were on it had changed since my time, it was totally new. The sound had been modified somewhat too. No, Laser's over. I'm sorry to see it go, even if I turn into a BBC company man tomorrow I'll still miss it because it was my home. It was my first serious job, the first place I ever did anything worthwhile. It was a very important part of my life and probably the worst and best job I'm ever likely to have !

Bill:- Finally Charlie, how do you rate British radio at present ?

Charlie:- After having worked for Orwell and some other ILR stations I see an awful lot of qualified people who are being held back in some way. I see a lot of people with creativity in them but they just don't know how to use it properly. It's obviously different from Laser but it's good in its own way, you've got to remember there are different strokes for different folks. You may think it's bad but there's someone else that thinks it's good and it does serve some people I think. The problem is, as I perceive it, there isn't enough choice. There should be a Laser in every town, they shouldn't rely on people like us to do it. I'm glad to help them improve ILR in any way possible, people have asked me about things and I've been happy to share some trade secrets with them. I've passed on a few helpful hints and I'm happy to sit down with any disc jockies and talk radio.

Charlie Wolfe also appears in a joint interview with Radio Caroline's John Lewis in Free Radio Waves 3 and talks more about his shows for commercial radio. Copies are still available for 80 p from P.O. Box 539, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 4RE. Cheques payable to B.F. JOHNSTON please.

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## OFFSHORE NEWS

Work on the M.V. Communicator in the River Stour appears to be progressing nicely. The hull is currently being given a fresh coat of familiar orange paint and we understand all the generators, apart from the 110 volt 60 hz one, are in full working order. The transmitter has also been overhauled and looks to be in far better condition than it was when the boat came in to port last year. The studios have been re-equipped and the gear includes Technics SP 10 turntables and Pye mixing desks. The mast is in a fair condition, one or two of the stays look a little ragged but nothing serious seems to be amiss. Our correspondent concluded that a lot of work is going on, especially in the bilges, but EAP seem to be taking their time and doing a proper job rather than just patching things up. The boat is still a bit grimey but there's nothing a good spring clean wouldn't solve and she appears to be fully sea worthy. The official story from EAP owner



Ray Anderson is that the Communicator will sail to the Mediterranean and possibly act as a seasonal station for the large tourist population. We understand that although he's undertaken not to use the boat for illegal purposes any future buyer would be exempt from the original conditions of sale and that opens up a multitude of possibilities !

Daily Star reporter Neil Wallis received a conditional discharge and was ordered to pay £ 50 costs when he appeared before Felixstowe magistrates on June 23rd. charged with supplying goods to the M.V. Communicator during the Euroseige '85 blockade in direct contravention of the Marine Offences Act. Wallis and a Star photographer had gone out to the ship with champagne and t-shirts to do an article on Laser and, so they claim, to demonstrate the ridiculousness of the M.O.A and the DTI's action.

Charlie Wolfe has paid a nostalgic visit to the Communicator and has also been doing freelance work for Radio Mercury in Crawley. He's been filling in for Pat Sharpe who was once lined up himself for a job on Radio Caroline as the new look station's breakfast show presenter. "Eurojock '86" David Lee Stone has joined Chiltern Radio in Bedfordshire and is currently hosting the Saturday 22.00 to 01.00 slot. He sounds in top form with plenty of over the top links and zany promos. Liz West seems more than happy at Radio Luxembourg despite 208's new unofficial slogan, "The station with more watts than listeners". The cruel jibe from some of their own jocks reflects Luxy's none too impressive recent audience figures. According to press reports the Laser Roadshow, also being billed these days as "The Stereo Hits Disco Roadshow", is going to change its name to The Caroline Roadshow Nite Out ! One thing is certain, well known character Robbie Day is still the money making brains behind the operation.

Kevin Turner has decided against an immediate move to Dublin superpirate Energy 103 and returned to Radio Caroline after a three week spell freelancing for Blue Danube Radio in Vienna on Saturday July 12th. His shipmates include Tony Christian who was previously a club deejay and has experience with Radio Sovereign in Italy, London funksters JFM And cable station Radio Thamesmead. He does a lot of Soul gigs in the South London area and also did some discos in Spain recently. John Dwyar made his debut on offshore radio way back in the mists of time on Radio Atlantis from the M.V. Jeanine and is a veteran of the Liverpool landbased pirate scene. He spent time in Ireland last year working for Mullingar's Radio West and also tried setting up his own station in the west of the country. Dave Andrews is off the ship for the time being following on-air announcements that he wished to be replaced and is also considering an offer from Energy 103 who seem keen to bolster their roster of on air talent. Andy Johnson is officially being 'rested' for a couple of months after he persisted in breaking 558's new format. Cosmic ran into problems before for not paying strict enough attention to the playlist but I'm sure his long service and efforts on behalf of the station will see him back on the Ross soon. Mark Matthews is also thought to have clashed with the powers that be about programming and has only been used on Overdrive of late. Congratulations to Mike Barrington who's currently enjoying some well earned shore leave after a staggering one year on board the Ross. That's not a record we expect to see broken !

Caroline fans in the Cambridge area now have their own local branch of the Caroline Movement. Supporters who would like to meet for social evenings, talks, videos, boat trips etc. should contact Graham Hayes of 181 Wallace Road, Cambridge CB1 3UD. There are also plans to put together a newsletter at some stage.

Listeners in June might have been suprised to hear Charlie Wolfe on 558 very briefly, he was just paying his old friends a brief visit but managed to record a couple of announcements for future broadcast. Kevin Turner also pre-recorded a number of links before he left for Austria and these were used to piece together fill in programmes when there was a deejay shortage. Several readers have written to us commending 558's new newsreader Australian actor Pat Danton who was also involved with Radio Jackie at one stage and is a friend of Peter Rivers.

# LIZ WEST

I'm sure all Free Radio Waves readers were delighted when the talented Liz West landed a job with Radio Luxembourg and she's certainly settled down well to life in the Grand Duchy. FRW cub reporter Bill Smith managed to ask her before leaving Britain about her days on the M.V. Communicator. First off, how did she become involved with Laser 558 ?

Liz:- I'd been working in radio for seven years. I'd had jobs in Miami, Orlando and Tampa which are all in Florida and I did a brief stint in California. The station there was called KDEZ and it was all great fun. A girlfriend of mine in West Palm Beech, Florida knew a gentleman who did a brief stint on Radio Caroline, he was over in the States looking for work on American radio and told me about this tremendous American station in Europe which was causing such interest. He gave me the address of Music Media International in New York, so I sent them a tape and the rest is history. Two weeks later I was in Britain. I was living in Palm Springs, California at the time and they flew me to San Francisco for an interview. I signed a contract, looked at pictures of the ship which were most interesting and that was it. Going out to the Communicator for the first time on a small boat I just wanted to die ! It was inbetween two very nasty north easterly force nines, there was a slight lull in the weather, and Erin Kelly and I had flown over on the same flight. We'd met together for the first time in New York, both of us were deathly ill because we had nasty chest colds and we weren't used to the damp February weather in Southern England. Anyway, we waited three days for this lull in the weather. They called us up and said, "right, we're going out" and during the five hour trip I stayed horizontal most of the time. I wasn't feeling particularly well !

Bill:- When you first got out there, how did you fit in ? Did you choose your own show or were you told what to do ?

Liz:- It was a baptism of fire really. The first thirty hours aboard the vessel there was a very bad storm and I stayed curled up in my bunk talking to God. Not being able to do very much else in the situation Erin was also ill. But after that initial period we were fine. The station had been on low power since the mast had come down in a storm and that gave us the chance to become acclimatised. We were meant to be broadcasting to six million people in England and god knows how many in Europe but we reckoned we were just about getting into Sheppey, it was sort of a training period which gave us time to get used to the equipment.

Bill:- What did you do when the station was off the air. I can imagine there's not a lot of scope on a radio ship in the Northsea ?

Liz:- Well you know, besides the mud wrestling which went on there was always something you could do to make the station sound better for when it came back. Just little things, even if it was reorganisation or fiddling with the computer and storing away information. We had a video machine, I did a lot of reading and you could exercise bicycle to the Bahamas and things like that. Plus there were all the parties, anything was an excuse for a party aboard that ship, so we had our share of late night soirees ! I never went to the Bilge Club, I understand there was still cattle poop down there and that alone was enough to put me off. We had an engineer who used to brew wine and beer from old fruit but the cow pies just didn't lend to a very good social atmosphere. If I wanted to rest I'd just threaten to kill anyone who disturbed me and I'd usually go to my cabin.

Bill:- How did the programming work ?

Liz:- It was up to the jock to work within the parameters that had been set up. Everyone was allowed to be creative within that framework and did their own thing, left their own little mark on the radio. Everybody's show was a bit different. We shied away from jingles, if we had something to say we'd do it ourselves rather than playing a jingle instead. We'd play maybe one an hour. Some of them weren't really very good...

Bill:- Did you actually comprehend before going to the Communicator what the boat was like, did you realise how small it was ?

Liz:- Have you ever seen that movie "Private Benjamin" with Goldie Hawn ? It was that kind of mentality. I got out there and it was sort of, "gee, this must be the boat that's going to take us out to the radio station !". I thought that the life-



boat holders were barbecue grills and things like that. It's true though, I looked at them and said, "good, we can have barbecues in the summertime". It was very different to what I'd imagined and, really, when I first came on to the boat I was so ill I didn't take much in. The dawning of realisation as to what I'd actually let myself in for didn't come for a couple of days. I stumbled up bleary eyed on deck and I looked around and went, "Oh my god ! My mother would die if she saw this !". I remember standing in the shower during a force six, hanging on to a pipe with my leg on the sink attempting to shave and trying not to nick that little vein on the side of the leg that lets you bleed to death.

Bill:- I understand you had another job on the Communicator, apart from being a deejay, what was that ?

Liz:- I was music director, I was responsible for everything that Laser played both current and old. I looked after what was added, the new music that we had put on the playlist, and categorising all the oldies. I filed away all this information on the computer and wrote, researched, produced and presented the weekly chart show. I also put together a Motown special which I implemented for a summer series run and little things like that.

Bill:- Does American radio compare directly to Laser ?

Liz:- Well, we were very autonomous. There was scant little that management could do, we were very self-ruled, but we tried to maintain the standards we had worked with in the States. We had all come from highly competitive radio backgrounds. Tommy Rivers and I, for instance, came from major market situations and that was the kind of structured programming we tried to set up. We tried to base what we did on consistency, so when a listener tuned in they knew they were going to be entertained and weren't going to get a bunch of chatter. They felt familiar and comfortable with that but we also tried to make it interesting as well so it wasn't predictable, we were on a sort of fine line. It took a lot of work and comparing it to American radio we were a CHR Top 40 hybrid. It was more Top 20 really, records in the lower reaches of the chart weren't played that much. We had a "power rotation" which was the most popular ten songs at that particular point in time and they would rotate every four to five hours. Then there was the medium rotation which was twenty five songs and they'd go round every seven hours. Finally, there was a light rotation which consisted of records with hit potential bubbling under the charts and they were played once every eight hours. On top of this were sixties, seventies and eighties categories, hot re-currents and that sort of thing. We had to be very careful, listeners in America tune around a lot to see what other stations are doing but the Laser audience were listening to us all day and we had to make sure we weren't playing the same song all the time.

Bill:- How did using cartridge machines instead of record decks work ?

Liz:- When you're on a ship you can't really rely on turntables because of the weather. I mean, you'd have to have a tremendous number of grams on your tone arm during a force nine gale to be able to track a song ! With a four track cartridge you don't have to worry about records skipping or cue burn and things like that, so for quality and reliability it was far more suitable than record decks. The nature of the ship didn't help, she rides very high on the water and feels the weather even more than the Ross Revenge. She's more of a radio ship than the Communicator can ever hope to be ! We had the odd cartridge getting eaten which is not a pretty sound but it's better than a record jumping.

Bill:- You mentioned earlier that you had problems with the weather at first, did you adjust ?

Liz:- Oh, it was wonderful ! It was like being an extra in an Andy Warhol movie. It gave us something to talk about. After the initial period of getting used to the storms it was rather fun, the clock would come off the wall while you were on the air and the microphone would hit you about the face and neck. Catts would fall out of the racks and you'd go toppling over, ashtrays would empty themselves all over you and you were trying to do a radio programme ! If you sat back and thought about it the whole thing was really quite amazing and very funny ! There were times I could walk past or literally crawl past the control room and see Tommy Rivers crumpled in the corner after having been thrown across the room and he'd have ash-

trays and records on top of him ! We just had to laugh about it and, as I say, it gave us something to talk about apart from what we were going to have for dinner that night.

Bill:- On a more serious note, what did you think about Euroseige '85 and what effect did it have on you personally ?

Liz:- It's the most amazing morale booster I've ever experienced. We'd been having a low point morale wise due to shortages in food and water, unfortunately these problems existed way before the DTI turned up, and when they arrived it gave us a reason to keep fighting. We championed the cause of free radio and were hellbent for leather, we were not going to let anybody take Laser away from our beloved public. That was the attitude we took about the whole thing. It was a good parody with Charlie and his Euroseige Updates and his bogus sponsors for them. It was a reason to get up in the morning and be a little bit creative, put something extra into it and to be honest the people on the Dioptric were just human, they were doing a job and it got to the point where we had quite a good relationship with them. They would ask us for songs and the girls would go up on deck and sunbathe and the boat would steam up and down with the binoculars real close to the ship. Chris Carson gave a pair of knickers to the Dioptric once, they loved that ! and I think they enjoyed the publicity we gave them. Caroline took a more tongue in cheek approach to it all, they were very subtle and didn't really draw a lot of attention to the presence. They didn't need to because Laser was covering it, we brought the public in on what was happening. Like when we lifted anchor and left our original station, we went fourteen miles South East just to see what the Dioptric was going to do. They waited for half an hour and then radioed to land to see what their instructions were ! They came after us and, because they're not an ocean going vessel and can't weigh anchor, had to circle round us all night in a force six gale and in the meantime Caroline had a tender. Caroline and us had planned to sail off in opposite directions one day and leave the Dioptric sitting around in the middle wondering which one to follow.

Bill:- What made you decide to go back to the original anchorage ?

Liz:- The captain decided to go back in the end. We felt they would just get another boat to monitor us and the cost to the tax payer would double from £ 50,000 to £ 100,000 ! It was basically just to fool around with them, it was great fun and we went back the next day. When we left we passed very, very close to the Ross Revenge and everyone stood out on deck waving and they blew their foghorn. The Dioptric tried to get inbetween the two vessels to take pictures of the crew, they did something a little bit wrong and almost rammed the Ross. So, knowing that all our transmissions were being monitored by the DTI, we mentioned it on the air to make sure the mistake was passed on to the senior officials at the Department !

Bill:- Finally Liz, it's very sad that we've seen the apparent end of Laser. What do you think about the station's demise ?

Liz:- It was blatant mismanagement, pure and simple. The DTI did not kill Laser, Laser killed Laser. People got rich at the expense of everyone on board that ship and all I can say is that if you don't maintain your product you have nothing to sell and if the crew aboard the Communicator had been taken care of it'd still be a radio station today. I'm very saddened by the demise because I feel like I've lost an old friend. It was the biggest thing to happen to British radio in twenty years and I think it raised public consciousness and I think the public demands more from their radio now. I hope they can get what they want from the Government. Let me just add that all you guys have made working for Laser 558 worth it, many thanks !

Thanks to Bill and Liz for making this fascinating interview possible. We also talked to Liz West in Free Radio Waves 2 about poor conditions on the M.V. Communicator and back issues are still available for 80p from P.O. Box 539, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 4RE. Cheques payable to B.F. JOHNSTON please.



August 14th. 1986 marks the nineteenth anniversary of the British Marine Offences Act and, as we won't be here next month, we've decided to devote a few pages to the pirate heydays ! We kick off with some personal memories from new FRW writer Rob Chapman:-

"I can't remember what actual incident or event prompted the immortal question. I suspect it was the extensive news coverage given to the Mi Amigo running aground on Frinton beach in January 1986, but at some time around this point an 11 year old kid turned to his father and said "Dad, what's a pirate station ?". I must have been obsessed right from the start because my persistent questioning got me sent to bed early, but from that moment I was hooked. Around this time I was doing all the abnormal things that 11 year old boys abnormally do, like sitting on windswept rainy railway platforms jotting down the numbers of dirty old steam engines in a dog eared and smudgy notebook. Several of my fellow trainspotters were older than me by three or four years and one in particular always carried a radio, a smart brown Grundig which must have cost at least £10 - a week's wages in those days. He was listening to these "pirate stations", and one day noticing my interest he patiently sat me down, and with an air of authority said "here's Radio Caroline, here's Radio London, and here's Radio Scotland...". Yes, if you pressed your ear really close up to the speaker you could hear the faint signal of Scotland on 242 metres. Pictured above is their small engineless ship the M.V. Comet and below is their owner Mr. Tommy Shields, now sadly deceased. Anyway, little did my friend know then (or ever will) that he had opened up a Pandora's box for me.

Listening at home was restricted to the old Bush radiogramme in the living room - that's when mum wasn't Hoovering or listening to Mrs. Dale's Diary (within a year of course I'd be hooked on another "Dale's Diary" !) and evening listening was out of the question as t.v. ruled. But 1966 was a vintage year for offshore radio, I

doubt there's ever been one to compare with it, and from left to right up the dial it went Essex, England, Scotland, Carolines North and South, 270, City, Britain and 390. Geographically, living in Bedfordshire as I did then, I was perfectly situated to pick up every station. Of course Caroline North, 270, Essex and Scotland didn't come in that well but were still listenable and



Left; Tony Blackburn and his sensible cardie on board the M.V. Galaxy, home of Radio London.

Below; The Radio 270 deejay crew line up on the deck of the Ocean 7.



the rest just blasted in loud and clear.

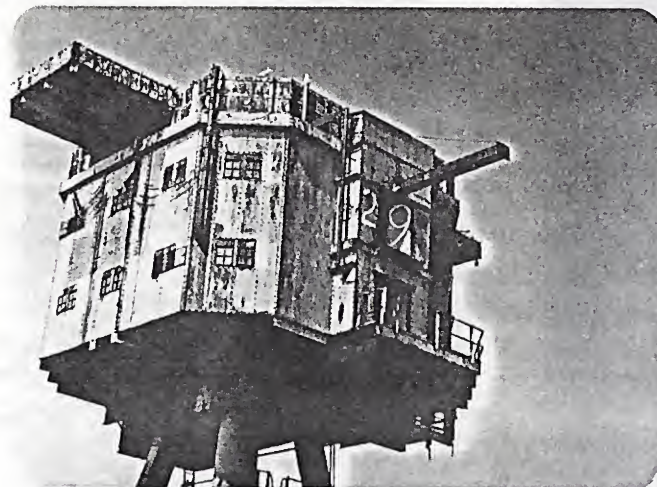
Hanging around with this older trainspotting crowd meant that I was always on the ball regarding station information. "Radio England begins broadcasting this weekend" they would say knowledgeably or "Caroline's back on the Mi Amigo", and I can still remember to this day Radio City returning to the air after they were occupied by a hostile boarding party in the summer of '66. A typical day's listening would be determined by how much access I could get to the radiogramme at home, and what my old friends chose to listen to. Generally it would begin with either Keefers or Tony Blackburn on the breakfast shows (the two giants Caroline South and London battling it out) switching over to Swinging Radio England just in time to hear the mocking American banter going on between Ron O. Quinn and Larry Dean, over to London for Tony "hullo" Windsor, and up to 299 for Tatty Tom Edwards, back down again to D.L.T for the lunchtime show and then Dave Dennis in the afternoon on Big L again. But the point was it didn't

matter who you listened to, there were no hard and fast rules. There was so much choice. If a station played a naff record or two you just moved on up the dial to the next one, this is how it should be, and how it once was. Of course I had my allegiances - Swinging Radio England was my favourite station. It was a complete revelation to my tender 11½ year old ears with deejays that called themselves "boss jocks" and had names like Ron "On The Radio" O. Quinn, "Boom Boom" Brannigan and Bruce Wayne (incidentally, does anyone out there know who Bruce Wayne really was, because he was definitely English) and news that sounded like it was coming from outer space, complete with echo ! They even used it on records - it took me years to get used to hearing Georgie Fame's "Getaway" without the reverb on the brass ! Radio England only had a short life, 6 months in fact, and we're told that the British didn't take to a wild and frantic U.S. format. It's strange, virtually everyone I knew loved it but S.R.E disappeared in November 1966.

Radio City was my second favourite. It had great jingles and an adventurous format. They seemed to play far more new releases than the others and of course they had the hilarious "Auntie Mabel Hour". Next came Caroline and London but neither of the giants gained complete dominance of my listening habits until both City and England had closed down.







Left; The Radio City "Tower Of Power" !

That vintage summer of 1966 passed all too quickly for me, and before I knew it the holidays were over and I was at "the big school". Despite the sheer inconvenience of having to go to lessons all day long and radios being well and truly banned there were brighter moments between the gloom. One was the school bus. We had three different drivers who had a kind of random rota for taking us three miles to and from school each day, and they all had a different radio

preference. Syd was basically a Light Programme man, which meant housewives choice in the morning and racing results in the afternoon. Sheer torture ! Stewart was a Big L man (as well he might be with a name like that) but best of all was Taffy, an out and out Radio England man. I can remember fellow school mates collapsing in giggles at the sound of Boom Boom Brannigan or Gary Stevens - god, how I despised them ! The biggest wind up of all was when the drivers would swap coaches. Taffy would pull in with SRE blaring out, we'd all troop on and then Taffy would vacate the seat for six ton Syd. As the coach pulled out of the school gates the sound of boss jocks would suddenly be replaced with Mantovani or the 4.15 from Kempton Park. Months later I was at a local football match one cold and rainy Sunday morning when I spied Taffy sitting in the car park, feet up on the steering wheel reading his News of the World. His coach suddenly seemed more inviting than the dubious privilege of watching my local team being humiliated in the mud. so I gave up my half hearted support and went for a chat. I remember, as clear as a bell to this day, he was listening to Britain Radio or Radio 355 as it had become. England was long since gone. And in the warm coach with the rain bucketing down outside we listened as one of the sweet music presenters ran down a list of what all the former Radio England boss jocks were doing now. Nearly 20 years on I would give an arm and a leg for a recording of that !

As if all this sheer fanaticism wasn't enough I haven't even mentioned the one event which bonded me for all time to the magic of radio. On November 10th. 1966 I received my first transistor radio on my 12th birthday. If ever I could trace a moment when the values of school were lost to me forever it was that day. No more listening to the radiogramme between the Hoovering and Mrs. Dale's Diary. Indeed no more mum complaining "what's this rubbish ?" as she went to switch on the Light Programme and Tony "T.W." Windsor or Keefer's Uprising came blaring out instead. No more restrictions !

Between November 1966 and the end of my first year at grammar school I lost more hours sleep to Steve Yonge's Nitetrip show and the Night Owl Prowl than I care to remember. The only really sad event in all of this is that the first morning I'd sat in bed with my new toy listening to Bill "The Boss" Berry he announced that Radio England would be closing down the very next day ! And, of course, little did I know that offshore radio had got less than a year of life left in it.

In those last few months my allegiances were evenly divided between Caroline and London. Caroline always had the edge for me. I liked my pirates to sound like pirates and the brash provincial tones of D.L.T and Johnnie Walker had always seemed far more honest than the smooth mid Atlantic patter of a Dave Cash or Pete Brady. But towards the end I warmed to Big L. I had always liked Tony Blackburn and Kenny Everett but now Keith Skues, Mark Roman and the rest came into their own (cue memories of warm station platforms on July evenings listening to Tony Brandon handing over to "The Roman Empire"). I think the other factor that prevented me from

listening to Big L more than I did was the hetrodyne whistle which seemed to effect reception in my part of the country. I believe they shared 266 with a megawatt German station, and certainly Caroline always sounded much clearer during winter months.

And then suddenly it was all over. One day we were arguing the toss on the school bus over whether London or Caroline would continue after the act, the next London was announcing it would be closing at 3 p.m. on August 14th. The last day I listened to Big L solidly from the moment I got up. Chuck Blair on the breakfast show followed by Pete Drummond, Ed Stewart, Tommy Vance and then finally, the man who had started it all on the M.V. Galaxy, Paul Kaye. As the hours ticked by and the stars paid their final tributes the records seemed more and more appropriate. "It's All Over" by Cliff Richard, "The Last Time" by the Stones...Mum even recognised the gravity of the situation and let me listen to the whole thing on the radiogramme (better reception !) but for those last few minutes before 3.00 I slipped out into the garden with my faithful trannie. Like so many that day, I thought it probable that at some point I was going to cry !

It was an overcast day, I remember that well (many people's memories of that supposed "long hot summer of love and peace" are well and truly misplaced. August wasn't particularly sunny at all) and as "A Day In The Life" faded away and Paul Kaye solemnly announced "Big L time is 3 o'clock and Radio London is now closing down" I tuned, like how many millions of others, to Caroline - Robbie Dale sounded pretty choked up and introduced a minute's silence. In that sixty seconds a thousand memories flooded back, memories I could fill a book with and for which there is not enough time here. D.L.T and Mike Ahearn's hilarious Christmas Day Batman spoof, Tom Edwards' "5 by 4" show, those amazing Radio England jingles and brash American deejays, all those great signature tunes, those crazy payola induced charts, and all those great records indelibly stamped on the brain. I still can't hear "Semi Detached Suburban Mr. Jones" or "Reach Out I'll Be There" without expecting the "Curly Headed Kid" or "Your Dinner Record Spinner" to announce them.

You may call this simple nostalgia, but people are only nostalgic when things are taken away from them. As I sat in that back garden on a cloudy Monday afternoon I knew Caroline would continue, but I also knew that something had gone forever and we'd never see the like of it again".

ROB CHAPMAN (JULY 1986).

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## PIRATES AND THEIR PROGRAMMING

We continue the nostalgia with the first part of Paul Graham's fascinating "Pirates And Their Programming" series. Paul is currently researching material for a book on Radio Caroline North and this month's article is an exclusive preview of the early chapters:-

Offshore radio in the sixties was very diverse and programming ranged from the brash, loud 'n proud approach of Radio England to the sober sweet music sound of Radio 390. This series of articles is designed to look at those formats and recall some of the names that put them into practice. We start with Radio Caroline, obviously the pioneer of British offshore radio, who made their first transmissions at Easter 1964. They had an assortment of shows from day one and here's a typical schedule;

- 06.00. The Early Show. Normally presented by Simon Dee for the first three to four weeks, his place was then taken by Tom Lodge. A mixture of pop hits and easy listening music, the theme tune was a sentimental ballad called "On The Street Where You Live" by Tommy Dorsey & His Band.
- 09.00. On The Air. Generally presented on tape by Carl Conway although, as revealed in Free Radio Waves 4, he spent brief periods on board doing the programme live. Once again, a mixture of pop, jazz, folk and other fairly mainstream material. The early shows had been recorded during March in a Soho basement studio.
- 11.00. Top Deck. Presented live from the ship initially by Chris Moore and later by



Jerry Leighton. It must be remembered at this stage that all the deejays had technical operators to play records and adverts, the jock would talk from the other side of the glass and waggle his finger when he wanted something started up ! It was really a very complicated, old fashioned BBC-style way of doing things.

- 12.00 Music Around Lunchtime. Again, first presented by Chris Moore and later Tom Lodge and featuring pop and light ballads.
- 14.00 Soundtrack with Simon Dee. Dee was Caroline's big star from the outset and nearly always hosted this popular show. He prerecorded a number of tapes before the station started and these were used while he was on shore leave.
- 16.00 The Big Line Up. One of the few pure pop shows which again started under the auspices of Chris Moore and then transferred to Tom Lodge. It stayed in the Caroline North schedule right up until 1966.
- 18.00 Downbeat. Jazz, Rythmn 'n Blues etc. This replaced "Sunset Spin" which ran until closedown at 22.00. Downbeat finished at 21.00, the station then went off until midnight.
- 24.00 The Late Late Show. The presenter of this three hour programme varied a fair bit and was mainly pop orientated with a smattering of folk, jazz, ballads etc.

So, that was the way Caroline sounded in those early days. It might be a good idea to look at the equipment used by the station way back then. The main control room was manned by the sound engineer and revolved around a Gates Studioette four channel mixer. To each side of this sat an Ampex pro tape machine, much of the music played by Caroline in those days came off reel due to the poor availability of records. Next to one of the Ampexes was a Gates 16" turntable, these had never been seen in the U.K. before and the BBC used far inferior Garrard or Thorens decks. Through the glass panel sat the deejay with his headphones, microphone and studio clock - that was it ! The sound engineers were Jan Gunnersson, Gerry Duncan, a guy simply known as Dave plus one other believed to be Allan Zephered (better known as DJ Mike Allen). Other deejays during the period we've been talking about include actor/comedian John Junkin who spent two weeks on the Frederica in May, Gerry Duncan also did a few shows and Alan "Neddy" Turner who started off as a humble crew man, progressed to a technical operator and ended up mikeside on several occasions. This brings us nicely to.....

## PROJECT ATLANTA

Project Atlanta was put together in 1962 by Australian businessman Alan Crawford. The first part of the year was spent searching for a suitable vessel, they eventually decided on the M.V. Bon Jour which had been used for a lengthy period by Swedish offshore pirate Radio Nord. The station was forced to close in July when the Government passed one of Europe's first Marine Offences Acts. The Bon Jour left its anchorage off the Stockholm coast on July 4th. and sailed to the Spanish port of El Ferroll, arriving there on August 2nd. She left Spain on September 14th. and headed towards the Thames Estuary where she took up station just north of the Shivering Sands fort. Tests were reported by several enthusiasts on 980 khz but there is no confirmation as to whether they came from the "Mi Amigo" as the ship had now been renamed. The American Radio Nord backers, Gordon McLendon and Bob Thompson (also the owner of KLIF Dallas), were becoming a little impatient waiting for their payment. Atlanta had hit money problems when the radio ship "Lucky Star" was seized by the danish authorities after trying to flout Denmark's M.O.A. The bill had been passed on July 31st. 1962 and the Lucky Star resumed transmissions a fortnight later, only to be boarded by Police and escorted into Danish waters after three days. All this heavy handed action worried Atlanta's backers and the majority pulled out their money. Crawford looked round desperately for new investors and suggested to McLendon and Thompson that he lease the ship from them, the Americans turned down the offer as they were

pessimistic about the future of offshore radio and wanted to unload the boat completely. The Mi Amigo sat around for three months, not actually making any broadcasts, and the disgruntled Americans ordered the ship to sail over to Texas where the aerial tower would be dismantled and all the technical equipment removed. She set off shortly after Christmas 1962 and eventually arrived in Galveston on March 9th. 1963 (cue Glen Campbell...). The project appeared to be in ruins but Crawford never gave up hope and eventually found new sponsors. He finalised the purchase during late summer and the Mi Amigo left Galveston harbour during November 1963, once again having to make that long trans-Atlantic crossing. A broadcasting crew was put together towards Christmas and included such well known names as Tony Withers (later known as Tony "T.W." Windsor" on Radio London), Colin Nichol and Richard Harris. A studio was built in Dean Street, Soho, London and the new team started stockpiling recorded programmes. Meanwhile, the Mi Amigo put in at Greenore in the Irish Republic during March 1964. The main priority was the construction of a new aerial mast, the previous tower had been removed in the States, and the switch on seemed imminent. Atlanta would have been Britain's first offshore pirate but they'd reckoned without Radio Caroline and Ronan O'Rahilly. Fate determined that Atlanta had chosen the same port as the M.V. Caroline and O'Rahilly's grandfather actually owned the docks. Caroline engaged in a dirty tricks war and made it out first, commencing broadcasts as outlined in the first part of this article. Atlanta wasn't far behind though, the Mi Amigo left Greenore on April 20th. and headed straight for the Thames Estuary. They experienced a few problems with the aerial tower and pulled into Falmouth for repairs. These only took a couple of days and she eventually arrived at her anchorage on April 27th., just one hour after Caroline had signed on for the first time.

The only broadcast crew on board were Johnnie Jackson and Bob Scott who had both joined the vessel in Galveston. Despite the different radio names, they were a father and son team and were put in contact with Crawford by Bob Thompson. Jackson was a vastly experienced engineer and had been employed by KLIF Dallas for a number of years. He had no problems mastering the Atlanta gear and tests were first heard on May 9th. 1964, a few minutes after 09.00 on 1520 khz. Bob Scott was the first deejay and sounded very professional, generally putting Caroline's novice presenters to shame. Atlanta's signal was also far superior, they were running a full 10 killowatts as opposed to O'Rahilly's 5. Proper programmes commenced three days later at 18.00 in an attempt to steal Caroline's audience, the frequency had been altered by then to 1493 khz. As we briefly touched on earlier, all the shows were recorded in Dean Street and sent out to the ship where Johnnie Jackson and Bob Scott would preside over the tape changes and make periodic live announcements such as time checks, programme introductions, news etc.

Let's take a look at Atlanta's first short lived schedule:-

### Monday to Friday.

- 06.00. Early Call - Bob Scott.
- 06.15. Country & Western Style - Johnnie Jackson.
- 06.45. Early Call - Bob Scott.
- 07.30. Breakfast Club - Ted King.
- 08.45. Musical Mailbag - Richard Harris.
- 10.00. Work Along - Clive Burrell.
- 11.15. Morning Star - Tony Withers.
- 11.30. Spin Around - Clive Burrell.
- 13.00. Headline Hits - Tony Withers.
- 14.00. Music The Wide World Over - Richard Harris.
- 16.00. Sounds Of The Sixties - Tony Withers.
- 18.00. All Systems Go - Mike Raven.
- 18.30. Music Of The Moment - Neil Spence.
- 20.00. Closedown.

### Saturday.

- 06.00. As Monday to Friday.
- 10.00. Downbeat - Tony Withers.



- 12.00. Sweet And Lively - Clive Burrell.
- 13.00. The Saturday Show - Tony Withers.
- 16.00. Latin Americana - Clive Burrell.
- 16.30. Best Of The Ballads - Richard Harris.
- 17.00. Country & Western Style - Johnnie Jackson.
- 18.00. As Monday to Friday except All Systems Go up till 19.00.

#### Sunday.

- 06.00. Sunrise Serenade - Richard Harris.
- 08.00. Croissants And Cafe - Clive Burrell.
- 09.00. Sunday Singalong - Neil Spence.
- 10.00. Quality Street - Richard Harris.
- 11.30. Turntable 64 - Tony Withers.
- 14.00. Music The Wide World Over - Richard Harris.
- 16.00. All Systems Go - Mike Raven.
- 17.00. Traffic Jam Sessions - John Ridley.
- 18.00. Nice 'N Easy - Clive Burrell.
- 20.00. Closedown.

As you can see from the above, "programmes" as opposed to "programming" was strongly evident. Atlanta, although stronger and arguably more professional, tended to sound rather empty and scripted as opposed to Caroline's very natural, relaxed atmosphere. It's hard to say who had the bigger audience, both obviously claimed it, but no one could deny that Atlanta had the strongest signal in Britain's advertising heartland - London - and O'Rahilly was concerned. Johnnie Jackson and Bob Scott left after only a month, their deep Texan drawl didn't seem to go down too well with British listeners, and they were replaced on board by deejay Colin Nichol and studio engineers Keith Martin and Bryan Vaughan. Colin was now responsible for all the live segments while Keith and Bryan acted as technical operators.

The restrictions of taped programming eventually began to tell and after a couple of months Caroline appeared to have the edge once more. Most of their shows were live and the topical comments were much easier to relate to. Behind the scenes O'Rahilly and Crawford were working on a merger and on Saturday July 4th. listeners could hear Simon Dee presenting his breakfast show from the Mi Amigo while Tom Lodge woke up the punters on the M.V. Caroline. This was all very confusing at first but the newspapers eventually put people straight. Atlanta had become Radio Caroline South, staying in its original position, and O'Rahilly's boat was sailing round to the Isle of Man and starting up as Radio Caroline North. This would give the station and its potential advertisers nationwide coverage. The two companies moved in to joint premises at 6 Chesterfield Gardens, London N.W.1 and the merger was complete.

The South ship continued to be run by Alan Crawford and the Atlanta management until Christmas 1965 when they were bought out by publisher Philip Solomon. Many of their on-air personalities and programme titles survived right through till the station's eventual closure in 1968. Project Atlanta had played its part in the birth of British offshore radio.....

(C)copyright 1986. Paul Graham.

As we mentioned earlier, Paul is currently researching material for a possible book on the life and times of Radio Caroline North. He'd like to hear from any Free Radio Waves reader who might have newspaper cuttings, photos, stickers, recordings and personal memories of the station. If you think you can help, please mark your letter clearly for the attention of Paul and write to Free Radio Waves, Flagstones, West Heath Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1TA.

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THE FRW ROLL OF HONOUR: Thanks to the following for their help:- Peter at the FRS Holland, Radio Orion, Radio Skywave, Dave Windsor, Barrie & Ruth at Anoraks U.K., Rob Chapman, Andrew Swaine, Mike Kuske, Kevin Turner, Bill Smith, John Kenning, BRS, Ian Harling, Paul Graham and everyone else who has put pen to paper for us !

# REVIEWS

## "THE TIME OF MY LIFE" presented by Bob Gallico.

Syndicated programming certainly makes good sense in Southern Ireland. There might be over eighty stations broadcasting to every nook and cranny of the country but few have the facilities and, dare I say it, staff to produce really professional shows. Major operators like Nova, Q 102 and ERI have all taken various U.S. productions like Casey Kasem's "American Top 40" and Gary Owens' "Soundtrack Of The Sixties" but many Irish people find these shows too brash and impersonal. Also, they're fine for a young or middle aged demographic but what about the vast audience nudging towards retirement ? Former Nova mainstay and Q 102 anchorman Bob Gallico has obviously spotted this gaping hole in the market and has come up with "The Time Of My Life", a sixty minute weekly syndicated programme which features the man's highly individual sense of humour and nostalgic music from the forties and fifties. The presentation is friendly and relaxed, there are plenty of amusing titbits dropped in between records and Bob is as personable as ever. One complaint - the editing could be a bit tighter, one or two of the splices were rather obvious. The programme's success depends entirely on what sort of market there is for this kind of production. My only worry is that the stations with the money to buy the show on a regular basis tend to be pop orientated and I really can't see Q 102 or Energy wooing twenty five year olds with Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra. Then again, with careful scheduling, maybe it might open up a whole new market for them. One thing is certain, if it proves to be a success it'll open the floodgates for a whole range of home produced Irish syndicated programmes and that can only be healthy.

58 minutes (2 minutes is allowed for the station's own commercials/trailers) plus a FREE personalised station promo for the programme. £ 30.00 per show, the initial contract is for thirteen weeks. Further details, samples etc. are available to all commercial operators from Anoraks U.K., P.O. Box 539, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 4RE or from Bob Gallico Productions, 156 Foxrock Park, Foxrock, Dublin 18.

## "NOW RADIO NEWS".

It's strange, last year you could count the number of free radio magazines on one hand and now a new publication seems to pop up every week ! Latest into the ring is Jay Jackson/Crispian St. John's Now Radio News which is a well written fortnightly general coverage magazine. The whole thing is put together with a word processor and printer which means there are no illustrations or photos at present, something I'm sure they'll remedy as things progress. The content is very spaced out (I'm not commenting on Jay's state of mind, just the gaps between news items !) and the cover price does seem a little excessive for just twenty pages. On the plus side, there's no question that the editor has a very fluent journalistic style and the articles in our review copy, the June 11th. edition, were well thought out and informative. The main emphasis is on BBC, community and commercial radio with additional pieces on the Northsea pirates, landbased free radio and programming. It'll be interesting to see how the magazine fares, I can't help feeling it falls between two markets - not "piratey" enough for the pedigree anorak and not sufficiently heavyweight for media people. I'd certainly recommend a sample issue, there are a lot of positive aspects to Now Radio News and it could develop into a major force.

20 pages (on average). Published fortnightly by Now Radio Communications, P.O. Box 45, Kettering, KT5 6TD. £ 2 per copy.

## BRS FREE RADIO SALES.

Border Radio, the former Twickenham community station, has put together a comprehensive list of London pirate memorabilia and tapes. Their thirty page catalogue makes fascinating reading with details of all the various cassettes on offer, a sample issue of their diary-style Monthly Report and various logos. Stations featured include the original Radio Sovereign, Radio Jackie, Solar Radio, Horizon FM and South East Sound. Recordings work out at between 3 and 5 pence a minute depending on the audio quality and rareness of the extracts, BRS tend to go in for complete shows rather than airchecks but some material is scoped. The



Report usually runs to about six pages and details, day by day, all the pirate activity in and around the capital. Their loggers don't seem to miss much and even with all our contacts and monitors they came up with a few names that were new to us ! I was rather amused by their "Out Takes" feature and hope the lads don't mind if I steal one as an example ! "When we were planning this wireless station one of the things we thought about doing was not letting the deejays say their names on the air, but just their initials: I can get away with it...'CSJ', then Rob Randell...'RR', but we had to stop the whole idea of initials when it came to Kevin Turner - can't have a young man announcing himself like that !". That was attributed to Crispian St. John. So, if you're a London pirate fan there's plenty to interest you !

The catalogue costs 35p or 2 irc's which is refundable with your first order. The Monthly Report is 45p or £ 5 for an annual subscription. "Glenburn", Cardigan Road, London SW13 OBH.

## FREEPOST

The debate on American radio and whether Free Radio Waves should cover the subject continues. Here's a selection of topical letters...

Derek Randell of Torquay contributes this thought:- "Your fixation for North American radio spoils an otherwise excellent magazine. I'm sure the New York radio scene is fascinating to New Yorkers but it's not really relevant here, surely ? So, let's see less U.S. and Canadian content and more of the interviews with current and former offshore personalities. The one with John Kenning was a real coup !".

Simon Willmott of Bristol says:- "I really enjoyed listening to the American Dream "New York Experience" tape. Most of the stations sound exciting and full of life but here in Britain the only station I have found to have lots of energy was Laser. As much as I like Caroline they are just "interesting" to listen to, something important is missing. I think the best thing for radio would be for Laser to return and/or Stereo Hits whatever to appear. Eurosiege '85 was a good example, Laser made the whole event compulsive listening with their blockade updates, the release of "I Spy For The DTI" and generally having good programmes. At the same time Caroline almost ignored the "Dioptric Surveyor" and "Gardline Tracker" on the air. Most Caroline listeners could be excused for not knowing anything at all about Eurosiege, if they did not listen to Laser. Moving on to FRW 5, I enjoyed your "American Dream" feature and Graham Whale's story of proposed offshore ventures. The list of projects that didn't quite make it to the high seas must be almost endless. I remember a feature in one of your original magazines about this subject concerning the sixties. Scan Radio and Radio Europa are another pair that may be possible inclusions in the future".

I think it's fair to say that Caroline ignored Eurosiege due to a management directive rather than by choice. The London office believed the Dioptric was there solely to deter Laser, this seems to have been born out by subsequent developments, and didn't want to antagonise the DTI further. Thanks for the kind comments about the tapes and FRW 5, Graham will be taking a look at other failed offshore radio projects in future editions and we may well update our piece on the nearly ran stations of the sixties !

Bill Cochran of Uttoxeter comments:- "In answer to your own question, 'yes' the American content is useful and informative. I wouldn't like to see a whole magazine devoted to the subject, that would be overkill, but four or five pages mixed in with other features on landbased and offshore free radio is fine. You're going to get the purists who just want details on Caroline and Laser, "Monitor" caters for this and without wishing to sound rude you, and nobody else, have a chance of beating them at that game !".

It's always nice to have a vote of support Bill. When FRW started we took a long, hard look at all the existing magazines and decided it was pointless to duplicate their format. As you so rightly say, nobody can hope to beat Monitor for in-depth

offshore coverage. We've tried to plug a few gaps in the free radio press, I hope we've succeeded !

Joss Hyde of Oxford writes briefly "Thanks for the very enjoyable copy of Free Radio Waves. Personally I find the offshore articles much more interesting than the other features".

Finally, we hear from Clive Southerton of Reading. "May I congratulate you on the latest issue of your magazine, it really is getting better and better and I guess this is probably because you deal in all aspects of radio, not just offshore and free radio but American broadcasting, the International scene and piles more. There were some great interviews in the last edition such as the chat with John Kenning of Sovereign and Laser. It was interesting to read his side of the story and yet another FRW exclusive. I loved your feature on American radio, it must be great to turn on and hear exactly what you want to hear. Living in Reading I find the FM dial is fairly packed but the diet of bland phone-ins and lost cats does become tedious ! Our local station Radio 210 has a few presenters who put their heart into the job, and does occasionally play some fine music, but these shows are few and far between. Nearby stations such as Guildford's County Sound are just so boring it's unbelievable. Caroline seems to be the only alternative at the moment, I must admit I like the music being played, and with its current crop of presenters such as John Lewis, Dave Andrews, Kevin Turner, Andy Johnson, Mark Matthews and John Dwyar, Caroline at last has a team to compare with its 1983/early '84 line-up. Actually, it's comparable with Laser in its heyday ( which was just after Charlie Wolfe joined, I think). The only problem is that they often seem short staffed. Listening to non-stop music is okay for a while but every night is beyond a joke !". Clive concludes by giving a plug for Monique's International brekkie show on Sundays from 04.00 till 07.00 with Ad Roberts. Certainly Ad's command of English is first class and the frequent interruptions from the Overdrive team make enjoyable listening. The trouble is it doesn't go very well with a severe hangover !

We welcome letters on any radio or magazine related topics. Feel free to put pen to paper and write to Flagstones, West Heath Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1TA.

## CLARK'S TRAVELS

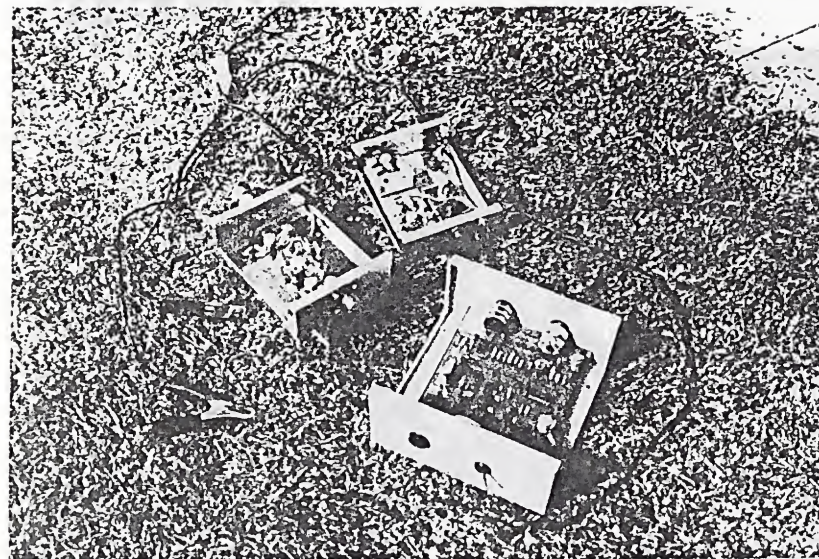
I've come to the considered opinion that you lot are spoilt. Do you realise my true worth as a literary wordsmith ? On second thoughts, I think we'll skip that question but you must admit I've taken you to some pretty damn exotic places in this series of Alan Whicker-style wanderings - Nice, Monte Carlo, San Remo, Waterford, Sunderland...yes, I realise the list gets less impressive as we go along but there's a limit to the number of people foolish enough to employ me. But, fear not dear reader, I shall soon be off to Israel for a brief spell on the Voice of Peace and you can look forward to my no holds barred, scandal filled report in Free Radio Waves 7. Meanwhile, I've decided to recount a few of my landbased pirate tales which takes us to the idyllic settings of Beddington Lane sewage farm and West Heath Girl's school (whimper !).

My bucaneeing days started at the tender age of fourteen when I was writing for the original Free Radio Waves in 1976. My first on air appearance was highly embarrassing and consisted of a fifteen minute DX' programme for the Gravesend based Radio Kent on 214 metres. Unfortunately they disappeared a few weeks later after the men from the ministry caught up with them but my imagination was well and truly fired by then. I made contact with Martin Davies, later known as Roger Vosene, who was the operator of short wave pirate Radio Zodiac International. I was a rebellious young thing in those days with a shock of green hair (I never had a hankie) and P.V.C trousers (I still wasn't potty trained) and offered to present a punk programme for them. The first bash contained highly deep and meaningless extracts from Clash and Sex Pistols interviews, a sort of "Gospel According To Rotten & Strummer", and featured mild mannered bands like



The Acme Sewage Company, Ed Banger & The Nosebleeds and Johnny Moped. The presentation was dire but the music was first class, a reflection of the times, and I was even voted the top short wave free radio personality in one magazine's yearly poll ! These punk spectaculars continued for about a year and really fired my enthusiasm. I managed to wangle a small 8 watt short wave transmitter from John Dawson and Andy Allman, then members of the medium wave London Music Radio, and started broadcasting myself on Sunday mornings as Radio Mercury International. We made our first few tests from Bromley Common, a wonderful place used by zillions of pirates down through the ages. You can still walk through their to this day and see years old pieces of aerial wire dangling from the trees, it's like an elephant's graveyard ! We were "raided" one morning by an over zealous Scout troop who thought it was a wizzard weeze to half inch all our gear. It was returned to us in one piece after I told the arkala precisely what I'd do with his dib-dib-dob otherwise. He was most distraught because one of his darling young lads, the instigator of the whole thing, got a 400 volt shock off the transmitter. We were naturally deeply upset and concerned about the poor chap's health..... Mercury was a relatively successful little station, we received over fifteen hundred letters from umpteen foreign countries and it was a great way of learning about technical gear and the running of such an outfit, albeit on a very small scale. Perhaps more importantly it gave me the chance to meet similarly inflicted people and all my future wanderings were due to these contacts. I remember sitting in the Radio Zodiac studios one day listening to a demo tape from a certain Kevin Turner. "Well, it's just about passable" we all said and they gave him a programme. Poor Turnip was so nervous we had to take him down the pub for a couple of pints before he could do his debut show, it didn't take him long to find his way and now he's bloomed into one of the best free radio jocks around. Don't tell him that though because he'll just get big headed ! Mercury closed after a police car stopped outside my house on a couple of occasions and spent an unhealthy ammount of time gazing up at my array of aerials. I still had a transmitter, so I decided to join up with ABC Radio in Romford, Essex and we helped form the 6235 Network with Zodiac, European Music Radio and Radio Zenith. You can read about ABC's escapades in Free Radio Waves 4, the station was a direct forerunner to ABC Waterford, and it was more invaluable experience. The only low-spot, in my opinion, was the day I was raided by the Police while broadcasting a Christmas special from the woods opposite young Mr. Parry's house. They actually belonged to West Heath School, the upmarket girl's establishment that Lady Diana Spencer attended, and one of their teachers phoned up the local Police station. I was caught red handed pushing all the gear across the road in a wheelbarrow. After being arrested and questioned for a couple of hours I was released and then John Ridd from the Hastings G.P.O turned up. John was an old adversary and seemed delighted I'd finally been nabbed, what really amazed me was that he had a folder containing all the dates and most of the locations of my umpteen broadcasts. It all proves a theory of mine that the authorities know damn well where 99 % of all broadcasts are coming from but they haven't got the time, inclination or possibly money to do anything about it. That's why it's really essential not to provoke the DTI, there's no point swearing or putting out political messages because you'll be whipped off the air within minutes. I was let off any further action due to my tender years and ABC continued uneventfully for a few more months.

I was also spending time presenting programmes and going on site with Eastbourne's Radio Liberty on 96.3 Mhz. The station also boasted Nigel Roberts among its staff and we had great fun roaming around the South Downs every Sunday with car batteries and a small 5 watt transmitter. The power might have been miniscule but the signal used to romp out, we made it across the channel to France on more than one occasion and Dover some fifty miles away was regularly part of the coverage area. My favourite memory is the night we were raided by the GPO and Police. Our look outs spotted the tracker vans five minutes into the broadcast but we decided to stay on the air until they made a move. We just watched through binoculars and rather cheekily waved down the hill to them. They made their move ten minutes before closedown, we were tipped off and managed to whisk all the gear bar the aerial and mast away from the scene. We actually walked past one official, lovingly known as "Baldie", but he decided not to challenge us on his own. We then spent two rather



Left: The ABC Radio Eastbourne transmitting equipment which is incidentally built by Freetec.

(continued):- nerve racking hours huddled under a bush in the pouring rain. I remember Nigel Roberts and myself had an attack of the giggles when we heard the Police crashing round aimlessly in the dark.

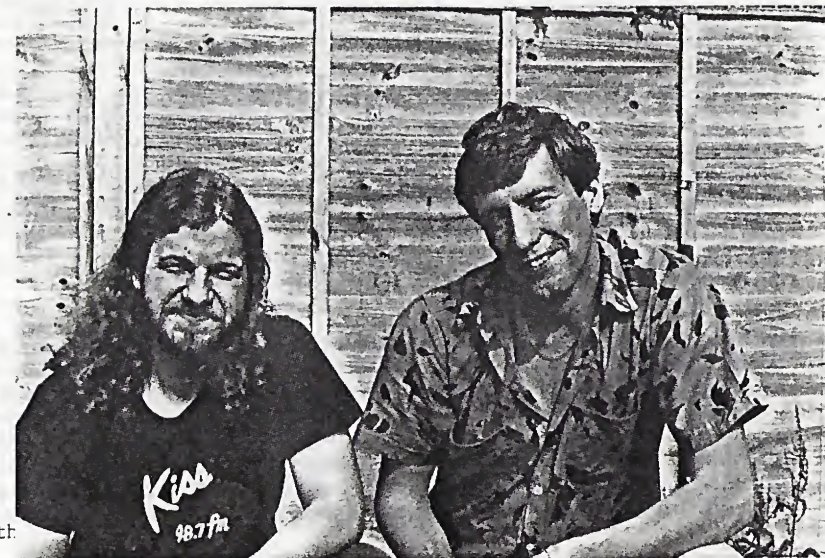
You might find this hard to

believe but I was an insufferable anorak in those days and Sunday mornings were spent tracking the London pirates. Radio Jackie was a favourite and we spent many a happy hour traipsing round Beddington Lane Sewage Farm. As you can imagine, this was a decidedly smelly place and on a hot summer's day there was a visible cloud of gas hanging over the effluence ! I remember turning up one day and finding the whole Jackie crew convulsed with laughter because Jerry James had just fallen in up to his neck. It really was very hard to work out what was firm land and what was crust with gallons of unmentionables underneath. I could go on for pages about my pirating adventures but many of them are meaningless unless you've known the thrill of being chased by postmen and lugging car batteries round muddy fields. We all used to moan and groan about doing it but, to be honest, it was all rather fun !

I'm pleased to say I renewed my membership to the habitual criminal's broadcasting club earlier this year when I started helping another Eastbourne station called, funnily enough, ABC Radio. I've been presenting the odd programme and generally lending my assistance. ABC uses a Freetec 35 watt transmitter and is regularly heard as far afield as High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire which must be a good ninety miles away. The DTI

left us alone for a few weeks, they're all heart really, but raided us on June 6th. just minutes into my programme. I regard this as a personal slur and I for one will not be contributing to the Home for Mentally Deranged Postmen this Christmas !

Right: Stuart Clark en route to Stonehenge with Andrew Swaine !





# KZEW

I'm sure many of our readers are familiar with John England and his offshore Wonderful Radio London International project that never got past the initial planning stages. John is now involved with a programme that appears on Texas station KZEW-FM ("The Zoo") in Dallas. It's called "The Rock 'n Roll Alternative", it's hosted by George Gimarc (pictured left) and goes out locally between 21.00 on Sundays and 01.00 on Mondays.

For several weeks the show has been featuring UK based offshore and free radio stations in their "Freedom Flashes". Quite what the Texans make of our pirate radio is anyone's guess but they've been treated to excerpts from Caroline and Laser, Radio Sovereign, KFM, Storeton Community Radio, Radio Horizon, Skyline Radio, Radio Jackie, Sounds Alternative, PRCL - Peoples Community Radio Line and Radio East Coast Commercial. George is currently interested in hearing from two groups of people:-

1). Anyone connected with or interested in U.K. Free Radio either as an operator



or listener and why it still exists today in Britain despite so much Government attention.

2). Any "new music" band, musician, singer or group who are willing to send quality demo tapes or records for exposure over the airwaves of Dallas. George Gimarc can be called 'live' at the KZEW studio during his programme, 03.00 till 07.00 our time, on 010-1-214-977-6484 to discuss any of the above topics. The address is KZEW, Communications Centre, Dallas, Texas 75202. You might be interested to know that KZEW-FM is just one part of a major Dallas based media organisation which in addition incorporates radio station KRQX-AM, television station WFAA-TV and The Dallas Morning News newspaper.

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## SOUTHERN IRELAND:

We kick off with a report from our source in Waterford...It appears when Suirside Radio changed its name to Crystal City Sound they also had a cash injection of IRE 20,000 from a boat building firm called Barrow Valley Marine. The money seems to have been spent on publicity, wages and equipment for the studio because their AM signal on 1332 khz and FM outlet on 98 Mhz is still restricted to Waterford city. Former ABC presenter Kevin McCarthy resurfaced on CCS for a while but left after only a few weeks. Inquiries were made about luring a well known offshore personality to the station but these failed. Waterford Local Radio have increased their medium wave

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power and modified the aerial system to produce a far better signal on 1197 khz. This is audible during the day on the west coast and at night throughout the U.K. WLR have spent somewhere in the region of £ 15000 recently in upgrading their facilities and have just installed three Sonifex cartridge machines in the main on-air studios which join a brand new Alice mixer. ABC Radio have added another small FM relay for the New Ross area on 99.8 Mhz. This is running 4 watts into a 7 db Yagi aerial and plans are also underway to increase the Waterford city output to 180 watts erp.

When I was working in Ireland I always wondered why the Government didn't hamper stations by insisting that all the various masts, transmitter huts etc. had proper planning permission. I kept my thoughts to myself just in case it gave the wrong people ideas but, two years on, it seems they are waking up to this efficient way of putting operators off the air

for lengthy periods. Paul Graham writes about the latest case:-

"On June 10th. Radio ERI, one of Ireland's biggest and most successful commercial stations, was forced to go off due to a court order brought against them by local residents who live next to their aerial/transmitter site on a little used road, roughly four miles north of Cork city. The action looks like a carbon copy of proceedings taken out against Radio Nova in March and it's had exactly the same results - ERI have been silenced! The incident becomes a lot clearer when we look at a little station history. ERI moved into Cork during October 1982 from their Ballycotton base where they'd started the previous May as "Cork Eastside Radio", initially on 102 Mhz. Then they'd obtained a large 10 KW Continental Electronics transmitter which was first fired up in September. I became aware of complaints from local residents during November when the new look station was being installed at White's Cross. Severe interference was plaguing most of the area's telephone system. The majority of complaints were ignored, although a few filters were fitted to people's television sets to reduce TVI. When I left ERI in June 1983 there were still severe problems and I don't think they've been sorted out to this day. After the mast was cut down, they put arc lights on the aerial and I'm sure this was causing a bad glare. They also installed a large, noisy generator which can't have helped matters. Nova's sudden closure and the refusal of planning permission for their mast must have given the local residents and their lawyers the necessary ammunition to have ERI



silenced". As ever, thanks to Paul for his contribution. ERI plans to relocate as soon as possible and may well be back in business on 1305 khz by the time Free Radio Waves hits the streets (or the postbox !). We understand ex-Northsea transmitter wizzard Robin Banks is in charge of the move.

One station who have benefited greatly from ERI's enforced closure are newcomers WBEN. Their line-up includes veteran Cork jocks Keith York and Nick Richards (also recently on the Ross Revenge). they're using a Cyberscan FM rig on 98 Mhz fed into a stereo Draumer compressor unit. The AM rig is the original South Coast radio unit, it's a 300 watt RCA 'ET' which has been used on both 1485 and now 1386 khz. The ABC engineering team have started work on a special Ellismod tribander (see advert in this section) which should improve the audio level by three to four d.b. WBEN take their name and jingle package from legendary Buffalo, New York rockers of the same name. They started life several years ago as ROCKY-FM, the name was taken from their restaurateur owner, but folded due to cashflow problems. The new look service was testing with non-stop music for several months before starting regular transmissions. They have a music orientated format with plenty of "15 minute commercial free music sweeps".

WBEN haven't got the Cork airwaves completely to themselves. Noted regularly of late are Leeside Sound on 101.5, Sunshine on 96 and South Coast Radio on 102.3 Mhz. S.C.R are due to be taken over by a Dublin concern and are hoping to increase their current 30 watts output quite considerably.

Mullingar station Radio West has started a free radio programme every Sunday between 11.00 and 12.00 hosted by former Merseyside pirate jock Philip Hilton. The show mainly features other Irish pirates and there have recently been live link ups with ABC Radio in Waterford and Heady Eddie of Boyneside Radio and short wave outfit Radio Rainbow. The programme is carried from time to time by Rainbow when their resident DXpert Kieran Murray is unavailable. West's main 10 KW transmitter is on 765 khz, the FM frequency is 99 Mhz and there's a new relay for the Athlone area on 701 khz. The big rig was formerly owned by Chris Carey's Radio Nova and provides good reception over much of western Britain.

Dublin's newest superpirate Energy 103 has not suprisingly started to accept advertising after a few weeks of commercial free operation. This was designed to attract listeners and was particularly effective in getting shops to use the station as background music. Energy boss Tony McKenzie has been hiring some new on-air talent and several offshore names, including Kevin Turner, have been linked with the station. Gareth O'Callaghan, Caroline's Tony Gareth, has taken up a position with Energy after leaving BBC Radio Bedfordshire under something of a cloud. Anoraks U.K. report the following schedule, effective as of June 22nd, which runs from Monday thru' Friday. 06.00 Tony McKenzie, 10.00 Jerry Stevens, 15.00 Gareth O'Callaghan, 19.00 Richard Jackson or John O'Hara, 00.00 Rick Dees' syndicated "Daily Dees" and 01.00 Mike Duggan. Energy finally have their jingles through and it was certainly worth the wait to hear such a punchy American produced package.

**NEW STATIONS:** Centre Radio Clonmel has started 24 hour a day operations on 1251 khz AM plus 88 and 101 Mhz FM. This is the first new station in the medium sized town for four years and is in direct competition with CBC, the Clonmel Broadcasting Company, who also make good use of an old ILR jingle package ! Liberties Local Community Radio has opened up in the Liberties suburb of Dublin and is owned by aerial contractor Sam Prendergast. He's put up towers for dozens of Irish pirates including the original South Coast Radio in Cork and Sunshine Radio in Portmarnock. The new station has a mixed format incorporating rock, ballads, jazz, pop and Irish music. Leading jocks Tony Allen and Peter Madison have all done freelance work for LLCR, they operate on 1035 khz AM and 107.3 Mhz FM And their address is 16 Weaver Square, Dublin 8. Their sales office is contactable on 538870 or 722747. Emerald Radio, best described as a "hobby pirate", have been testing in the Galway area with low power. This is run by and for schoolkids, they'll be closing down at the end of August when I guess they all have to return to their studies. Reports also reach us of a Candy Radio starting shortly in

nearby Ballinasloe. Mullingar has a second operation in the shape of Midway Radio. They have a predominantly Irish format with a limited amount of pop and middle of the road music. Presenters include former Radio West jocks Colm Mac, Dave Murphy and Gerry Connell. They operate with reasonable power on 1494 khz and 104.7 Mhz, the address is Lynn Road, Mullingar and they can also be contacted on 044-42703. City Sound Radio is situated just inside the Republic and is beaming its programmes into Derry city. They operate with 100 watts on 98.2 Mhz, soon to be increased to roughly 1/2 KW, and are also planning to run a 1 1/2 KW medium wave service on 1566 khz. Their address is 33 Shipquay Street, Derry. Tel: (0504) 260315. Independent Radio Longford signed on officially for the first time on June 9th. and are currently running temporarily low power on 99 Mhz. Much of the equipment in their custom-built studios originates from Athlone Local Radio. ALR closed suddenly on May 26th, taking many people by surprise, after a relatively short period of time on the air.

THE ABC RADIO ENGINEERING TEAM can build a whole range of custom audio processing equipment for all AM, FM and SW applications. These can dramatically improve the quality and loudness of your modulation/deviation giving your station a greater reach and far punchier sound. The range of units starts at IR£ 250 and include a specially developed Ellismod Tribander processor which gives you Optimod-style results at only a fraction of the price. Send an Irish s.a.e or two international reply coupons for a full list of the ABC audio range to 4 Arundel Square, Waterford.

Much of the information used in our Irish section is either supplied or verified for us by Anoraks U.K., P.O. Box 539, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 4RE. We print an overall review of news and activity but this organisation's excellent "Weekly Report" has all the latest details of old and new stations alike just days after the event. Send a stamped addressed envelope for a sample copy.

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## Offshore Echo's

### Europe's Leading FREE RADIO Magazine

OFFSHORE ECHO'S is published *regularly five times a year* in two separate editions, one English language and the other French language. There are more than fifty pages with many exclusive photographs in each edition of *Europe's leading FREE RADIO magazine* and each issue features the latest Offshore radio news from Caroline and Monique as well as the Voice of Peace. We also look at the Irish radio scene, land-based pirate activity as well as features, reviews and interviews.

The emphasis of OFFSHORE ECHO'S is on *OFFSHORE RADIO* and a popular item is the *in-depth interviews* with Offshore radio personalities both past and present. Screamin' Lord Sutch, Ronan O'Rahilly, Colin Nicol, Tony Blackburn, Liz West, Ad Roberts and Charlie Wolf are just some of the many we've spoken to. The series *Yesterday and Today - Where are they now?* looks at the careers of the many offshore radio names, starting with Radio Atlanta and continuing through Britain/Radio England to the popular Seventies station Radio Atlantis, the series is currently looking at Radio Carolines many staff over the years.

Single copies of OFFSHORE ECHO'S cost £1.80 each, or a subscription for one year (five issues) costs only £8.50. Just send a cheque, postal or money order (payable to B.F. Johnston) or securely wrapped cash to OFFSHORE ECHO'S, P.O. Box 539, Blackpool FY1 4RE, England. Or send an SAE/IRC for more details.



The hot, humid weather has been ideal for FM DX'ing and there have been dozens of French "radio libres" logged in different parts of the country. Here's just a brief selection with further details where known.

Radio Boulogne Littoral's English service has just completed a special series of programmes billed as "The Great RBL Summer Oldies Extravaganza" which ran for four weeks and encouraged listeners to write in with their top three classics. We mentioned the station had increased its deejay staff in the last issue, Stuart Clark has now returned from the U.S.A and will be hosting shows until he joins the Voice of Peace, Jeff Johnson is an experienced presenter who also works in professional British radio and Mark Daniels previously hosted shows for a couple of landbased pirates and hospital stations. Just to re-cap on their schedule, the Sunday night service starts at 22.00 and features station manager Mark Allen and Kent club deejay Tim Stewart. The Monday programmes commence at 19.00 with five or six different presenters and the format is mainstream top 40, new releases and classic oldies. A free station newsletter is available on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope at P.O. Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk. DX'ers should note that their 91.6 FM spot becomes clear after various Radio 3 relays close at midnight. They've also been logged before this, as early as 22.00, by a listener in Nottinghamshire! There have been one or two problems with the audio quality in recent months but RBL will be handing over maintenance of their transmitter to the state run TDF in a few days and this should improve technical standards. They're also putting the finishing touches to a new £ 100,000 studio complex.

Europe Number One, which is based in West Germany and broadcasts daily in French between 05.00 and 02.00 on 254 khz with 2 megawatts, has started taking advantage of France's more liberal laws and we've noted a relay on 104.7 Mhz with excellent strength. Europe Number One have a fast moving top forty format with plenty of jingles and reports for all services should be sent to P.O. Box 1365, 6630 Saarlouis, West Germany. Our guess is that they've found the other radio libres tough competition and as a medium long wave has become outmoded.

Another N.R.J relay has been logged at the Free Radio Waves office and various locations in the South East. The 94.3 Mhz channel runs in parallel with 99.8, heard persistently over the past year, carrying the same ultra-professional pop music service. A measure of N.R.J's popularity and credibility in the music business is that they're promoting Norwegian band A-Ha's nationwide summer trek round France. The station's main office is at Cedex 1616, Paris Brune (tel: 720.90.22).

Radio Chanson Francasise, who normally id as "RCF", operate 24 hours a day from Paris on 105 Mhz with an easy listening format. Good signals were noted regularly towards the end of June and reports should be sent to 119 Rue de Flandre, 75019 Paris, France.

Also logged recently are Radio Contact from somewhere in France on 93.3 Mhz with middle of the road music (further information would be appreciated), yet another KISS-FM from the west coast on 98.2 Mhz, the Belgian WLS on 101.9 Mhz who have now replaced their antique American jingles with a first class new package and RVS, Radio Valee de Seine, on 102 Mhz. The later can be contacted at B.P. 654, 76008 Rouen, Cedex (tel: 35.98.00.20).

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#### NEWS ROUND - U P:

Spin Magazine, which has been widely advertised by Radio Caroline as now being available in Britain, is still not obtainable from any of the large London newsagents we've visited recently. Copies have been spotted though at Harrod's magazine department but these have been specially imported by the store, they're not originally intended for distribution in the U.K. In reply to several queries, a year long 12 issue subscription costs \$ 26 airmail for European readers and the address is P.O. Box 46000, Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621 9934.

Free Radio Waves and The American Dream were pleased to provide recordings of

several New York radio stations for a feature on Steve Allen's LBC Night Extra programme recently. It was great hearing the likes of WPLJ and the Z Morning Zoo keeping London wide awake!

No news is bad news for Radio Nova International in Seborga, Italy. The station passed on to new owners several months ago and plans were afoot to relaunch the service 24 hours a day on 101.2 Mhz as from May 1st. Programmes were planned in German and English but, at the last minute, the new backer pulled out leaving Nova in a state of limbo once again. Station manager Mark Dezzani and technician Ian Hurrian are still living at the station's mountain top studio complex and are hopeful of a rescue package. Meanwhile, Nova keep the channel clear with non-stop music tapes and periodic identifications in German, Italian and English.

Our old friend Dave Windsor reports more change at Riviera 104 in nearby Ventimiglia. Head of music Paul James resigned a few months ago and is now working for a London based radio consultant. His duties have been assumed by evening man Lawrence John and the format has mellowed somewhat as a result. Lawrence has been joined by his former Nova partner in crime Chris Barry who is presenting a number of programmes. Pete Twist has moved studios and is now involved full time with commercial production. Riviera's new director, New Zealander Richard Yonge from Radio Pacific, has initiated a spending spree and a great deal of new equipment is being purchased including a satellite dish to receive various news and sports feeds. They also plan to go stereo and are currently being relayed by a Radio Monte Carlo transmitter on 106.5 Mhz. Former owner John Kenning informs us that he's sold his minority share in the station to the Monte Carlo businessman and new Australian company that assumed control last year.

In America the Federal Communications Commission are considering proposals to open up the 1600 - 1700 khz portion of the upper medium wave band for commercial use. The idea has emerged because the standard AM band is now completely saturated and the FCC are loath to issue any fresh licenses.

**TX**

LONDON'S  
ALTERNATIVE  
RADIO  
MAGAZINE

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# \*SKYWAVE\*

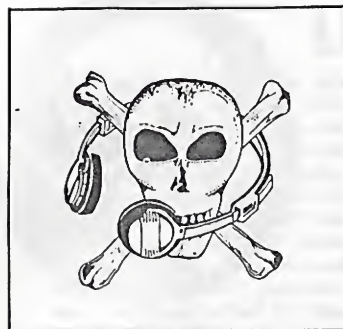
Free Radio Waves 7 will contain the complete FRS Holland story penned by station manager Peter Verbruggen. Talking of Peter, I'm sure all the FRS listeners out there will join us in congratulating the lad on his recent marriage to a charming you Dutch lady! Anyway, to whet your appetite for this forthcoming blockbuster of a feature, here's a quick rundown of the station's schedule and programme line up. Please note that all broadcasts are currently relayed for security reasons:-

2nd. Sunday of the month. Via Radio Rainbow, Southern Ireland on 6240 khz.  
08.00 - 09.00 GMT. A special issue of "FRS Magazine" which gives all the latest station news and gossip!

3rd. Sunday of the month. Via Radio Del Mare, Belgium on 6205 khz.  
07.54 - 08.00 GMT. Opening identifications and theme tune.  
08.00 - 08.45 GMT. "FRS Magazine" with Peter Verbruggen.  
08.45 - 09.15 GMT. "FRS Golden Show". Joop ter Zee relives the sixties and seventies with non stop hit music.  
09.15 - 10.00 GMT. "FRS Goes DX". Peter is back with the station's flagship programme, a lively 45 minute romp through the free radio world with upto date landbased and offshore news, recordings and comment.  
10.00 - 10.45 GMT. "The German Show". Danny Kay presents some special Teutonic toe tappers!  
10.45 - 11.15 GMT. "The International Listeners Show". Gerd and Peter read through your letters and requests.  
11.15 - 12.00 GMT. "Sounds Alternative". Joop ter Zee presents a mix of musical trends and contemporary album music.  
12.00 - 12.30 GMT. "Free Radio Spot". Either featuring a well known landbased pirate or a special broadcast documentary.  
12.30 - 13.15 GMT. "Musical Express" with Bert van Leer. An exciting programme for "Soul Brothers" Europe-wide, guaranteed to put some muscle in your hustle and glide in your stride!  
13.15 - 13.45 GMT. "The International Listeners Show" Part Two. More letters, requests and dedications with Uncle Gerd and Uncle Peter!  
13.45 - 14.00 GMT. "FRS Goes Nuts". Here's a programme that's difficult to classify. Plenty of strange Dutch humour and music with a distinctly avant garde flavour.

4th. Sunday of the month. Via the IRRS (see below), Southern Ireland on 6223 or 6275 khz. The selection of shows always includes repeats of "FRS Goes DX" and "FRS Magazine" from the previous week.

As briefly outlined in Free Radio Waves 5, FRS Holland are definately one of the



leading short wave pirates and their cosmopolitan "International" flavour makes for enjoyable listening. Their address is P.O. Box 41, Dedemsvaart, Holland. 2 international reply coupons please for information, stickers and a list of promotional offers including badges, t-shirts and videos.

## RADIO SKYWAVE

Due to the illegality of their operation, short wave pirates tend to come and go with alarming rapidity. The backbone of the 48 metre band free radio scene is the half dozen or so Irish stations that broadcast every week, often with high power and live programmes. The Irish operators can't really be termed pirates, then again they're not exactly legal, but their shows are directly targetted at DX'ers and they're motivated by enthusiasm rather than commercial considerations. Radio Skywave started on Sunday July 28th. 1985 with a four hour broadcast on 6260 khz. In those days they were using 40 watts fed into a  $\frac{1}{4}$  wave vertical longwire. Further tests in early August resulted in reports from all over Southern Ireland and the United Kingdom. Impressed by the response, station operator Michael Caine (not a lot of people know that!) commenced full programming on August 25th. with a new  $\frac{1}{2}$  wave dipole antenna and letters flooded in from all corners of mainland Europe. Skywave stayed put on 6260 until October 13th. when they tried a test transmission on 7300 khz, 41 metres. They returned to their old channel the following Sunday and in subsequent weeks extended programme hours from 08.00 till 15.00.

The station ticked over nicely during the rest of October, November and early December. They tried a couple of different locations, with mixed results, and also carried out an abortive test transmission on 7475 khz. They made a final location change on December 29th. and have remained there ever since. Belgian pirate Radio Del Mare closed in early February (they're now back) and, due to some co-channel interference on 6260, Skywave decided to take over the vacated 6206 khz spot. For a couple of weeks they simulcast on both channels, later dropping the original frequency altogether. FM tests took place for the first time on February 15th. with a power of 15 watts on 96.57 Mhz. A new hundred watt amplifier has now been completed and is due to go into service shortly, there are also plans to construct a stereo encoder.

Skywave has set up the International Radio Relay Service (IRRS) which carries programmes from stations that don't have their own transmitters. Organisations which regularly use this service are all listed in Free Radio Waves 5 but the more famous names include Falcon Radio, FRS Holland and the 4 Freedoms Radio Network. A second relay transmitter, operating simply as "Skywave Relays", is due to go into service soon and stations wishing to book airtime can contact Michael at the address below for further details and rates.

The station is currently testing on the 19, 25 and 31 metrebands. Frequencies to check are 15443, 15823 and 16267 (19 mb), 11450 and 11480 (25 mb) and 9925 and 9962 (31 mb). Test transmissions are also planned for 1320 khz with 200 watts and reception reports for any of the plethora of channels are welcomed! They'll be verified with one of Skywave's colourful QSLs and a newsletter. DX'ers that send in five or more different reports will receive a special photo-card showing their studios and transmitters.

RADIO SKYWAVE, P.O. Box 1686, Dublin 1, Ireland.

## RADIO ORION

Radio Orion have earnt themselves a place in short wave pirate history by becoming the first station to operate a regular seven day a week schedule. They started at 10.00 GMT on February 19th. and have since then been on for two hours every weekday and three to four hours at weekends. 6240 is the frequency from

"INT. MUSIC RADIO  
FROM HOLLAND  
TO EUROPE.  
TUNE IN TO THE  
WONDERFUL  
WORLD OF S.W.  
ON 48 & 41 M."





Monday to Saturday, they switch to 6266 khz on Sundays to avoid clashing with Radio Rainbow from Southern Ireland. DeeJay Mike Wilson takes up the story, "the idea behind the station was simply to have a seven day a week short wave service. I thought it was silly that the band was congested on Sundays, yet empty the rest of the time. Orion concentrates on giving listeners good music and plenty of it without the constant "gab" or clutter associated with BBC and IBA stations. We also keep listeners upto date with radio news although there isn't a specific DX' show, we feel the likes of FRS Holland already cater for that need. Orion also has a policy of allowing anybody who wants to do a show to go on the air. This has worked out quite well and I feel it gets listeners involved with the station. We've also allowed our transmitters to be used by Radio Rainbow from West Germany, Radio Gravestone International, Canzoni Radio and U.K. Radio". Mike went on to tell us that Orion has received 85 reports,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of these are for the weekend programmes but they're quite pleased with the steady response to the daily programmes. So, the full schedule is Monday to Saturday 10.00 till 12.00 GMT and 09.00 till 12.00 on Sundays. The majority of programming is in English but there are also special French and German shows for international listeners. The deejay line up comprises Mike Wilson, Alan Davis, Paul Johnson, David Jarvis, Mike Harris, Andy Scott, Frederico and Ross Gardline. They're running 18 watts with an 807 valve in the final stage giving most the juice. There has been a little interference on 6266 khz of late and Orion are considering a slight move to 6274. Anyway, a well run and dedicated little station. They can be contacted at 82 b Edgewood Road, Rednal, Birmingham B45 8SG and correct reports will be verified with a QSL card and information sheet.

All keen DX'ers are recommended to try a sample issue of the World DX Club magazine "Contact" which is published monthly and covers all aspects of long distance reception. The latest edition runs to 32 close typed A 4 pages and has hundreds of MW, SW, FM and UHF logs plus special news, programming and letters sections. A sample costs 50 pence or 2 international reply coupons. Write to Arthur Ward, 17 Motspur Drive, Northampton and please mention Free Radio Waves sent you!

Radio Telex ask us to point out that their excellent four page fortnightly bulletin costs just one international reply coupon, not two as we mistakenly printed in FRW 5, and is available from Duempter Strasse 6, D-41000 Duisburg 12, West Germany. Plenty of upto the minute news, logs and addresses.

Finally, Pirate Info News is a must for all German speaking DX'ers and has an incredibly detailed short wave section which should appeal to Skywave readers. Three irc's will secure a sample issue of this bulletin, it's available from P.O. Box 220342, D-5600 Wuppertal 22, West Germany and appears bi-monthly.

Free Radio Waves is toying with the idea of producing a thirty minute magazine programme for short wave syndication. The show would include free radio news, DX' tips and snippets from the various recordings in our new catalogue. The whole thing would be scripted and presented by deejay Stuart Clark and we're keen to hear from any stations interested in taking the programme free of charge.



## LONDON NEWS

Hopefully the Government's decision to completely scrap their community radio plan will result in a surge of landbased pirate activity in the capital. Certainly, stations such as Solar Radio and Horizon Radio closed last year with the specific intention of obtaining a license and might well be inclined to switch on again. The same question must be asked about Radio Jackie in South West London. After more than fifteen years of successful clandestine operation will Jackie be content to call it a day once and for all? Our money is on a comeback in some shape or form, let's keep fingers crossed!

T.K.O., Total Knock Out, shifted from 102.4 Mhz shortly after the publication of Free Radio Waves due to interference and settled on the new spot of 90.9 where reception is far better throughout the capital. According to announcements noted on July 5th. the station now intends to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and has started carrying advertising for established companies like Tennant's Lager and Streetsound records. T.K.O have a predominantly Soul format with a smattering of Reggae, the audio quality has been slightly suspect of late with a severe lack of bass and far too much treble. Most broadcasts are in stereo and the separation is certainly very good. Their address is 58 Victoria Way, Charlton, London S.E. 7 and advertising inquiries can be made on 01-350-0698.

Starpoint Radio moved around a fair bit during June. They were noted on 92.7 Mhz for the first time on the 8th. and shifted seven days later to 94. They returned to their original home of 88.6 Mhz on June 22nd. and have remained there ever since. Starpoint have now phased out all their other specialist shows, such as a horrendous Europop programme, and have a 100 % Soul format. They can be heard every evening from 18.00 and 24 hours a day on Saturdays and Sundays. Presentation is fairly average but the technical quality is always very nice. Their address is 197 Stockwell Road, London SW9 and 01-761-2592 is their advertising hotline. The transmitter is usually located in Lambeth and pushes out 100 watts. One programme not to be missed is John Dawson's selection of classic Motown and Philly soul between 20.00 and 22.00 on Friday nights. John is the former founder and engineer at LWR, he left earlier this year after disagreements with the new management.

Talking of LWR. they've now resumed 24 hour a day operations after a couple of weeks break in late June following another DTI bust. The station seems to be having a few technical problems, for instance the audio was severely distorted on July 4th. and several breaks in transmission have been noted on other occasions. Response though seems to be on the up and all recent LWR Soul all dayers have been well attended. They've also started airing a new set of Bill Mitchell voice overs which rely heavily on dig-dig-digital delay. The programming is fair, encompassing most aspects of black music, but some of the deejaying is very poor. Still, a good selection of go go, jazz funk, electro. soul and reggae. LWR's address is 37 b New Cavendish Street, London W1.

Sina Radio, London's only remaining Asian station, is still heard fairly regularly on 90.7 Mhz with poor to fair reception at the FRW office. The majority of programmes are taped although several live shows are aired every week with plenty of requests and dedications. They only seem to have a couple of presenters and announcements are in both Indian and English, they also still announce the frequency as 90.2 for some strange reason. The address remains P.O. Box 12, Southall, Middlesex. Sina's sister operation Asian People's Radio was one of the many groups disappointed by the failure of the Government to go through with the Community Radio Bill - are they another station that's likely to make a return?

The Jamaican Broadcasting Company, known more commonly simply as "JBC", has had more success than most London pirates in avoiding DTI raids. They were active for much of June operating seven days a week where possible from 12.00 until the early hours of the following morning. They're also on 24 hours a day at the weekend and reception on the new frequency of 104.75 Mhz is fair despite interference from the Greeks on 105 who tend to over deviate and splatter. Our friends at the BRS Monthly Report say the station escaped a recent raid because Merle Amery, the Labour leader of the



Brent Council was being interviewed live. Apparently the DTI wanted to avoid giving JBC the massive publicity such a bust would result in. More importantly the ruling Labour group have officially endorsed the station and is supporting its bid for a license. Meanwhile, JBC have diversified their output with special programmes for the Asian and Irish communities in North London. Their address is 126 A Roundwood Road, London NW 10.

Bad news from North London where the very professional and popular 3BR (Three Borough's Radio) have decided to call it a day following a recent court appearance. Two of the staff were fined a total of £ 325 arising out of various offences for their transmissions on 1125 khz AM. There seems to be little continuity with penalties, we've heard of first time offenders being fined anything between £ 80 and £ 1000 for virtually identical charges.

#### REGIONAL NEWS:

ABC Radio in Eastbourne resumed transmissions as promised on June 15th. with a test between 18.30 and 21.30 on 105 Mhz. ABC have just completed a successful four week Sunday run and hope to maintain regular transmissions for the rest of the summer. They were actually raided by three DTI officials on July 6th. but thanks to their lookout system they were given advance warning of the action and managed to spirit away all the equipment. Their 35 watt transmitter has been providing excellent reception over much of South East England. They even received a report from ninety miles away when the power was temporarily reduced to 4 watts. They've also been featured in the local press and the deejay line up includes Stuart Clark, Andy Ellis, Andrew Swaine and Gary Oliver. The address is 28 Clyde Park, Hailsham, Sussex. Fellow Eastbourne pirate Radio Veronica was the subject of a court case on July 8th. Despite pleading not guilty a young man was fined £ 50 plus £ 50 costs for his involvement in the broadcast. The sting was taken out of the fine when the DTI were ordered to return all the equipment bar the transmitter. The men from the ministry were reportedly none too pleased ! Veronica were raided just twenty minutes into a non-stop music test and never managed to get an official programme out. We understand a return to the air is more than possible in the next few months.

Radio Sovereign based in the Romney Marsh area have stepped up operations and can now be heard every Sunday from 10.00 till 19.00 on 105 Mhz with 90 watts. The station also made a few Saturday broadcasts which met with excellent response but these have been dropped for security reasons. They now have t-shirts and stickers available for £ 5 (S/M/L) and 60 pence respectively. They can all be ordered from 32 South Road, Newhaven, East Sussex.

Radio Atlantis made a test on July 9th. between 20.00 and 20.30 and followed this up with a full transmission the following Sunday on 105 Mhz. They're based in the Tundbridge Wells/Hawkhurst area and run ninety watts. The staff also operate as Radio Atlantis Short Wave at Bank Holidays and other special occasions. The address is P.O. Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk.

Radio Neptune from Hertfordshire was raided a few weeks back during one of their regular Sunday morning/afternoon transmissions on 1566 khz. The DTI didn't actually catch anyone with the mobile equipment but cautioned a man with his son who were found nearby. They removed the transmitter and ancillary items, leaving an official receipt pinned to a tree for the operators ! Neptune has been on and off the air for well over ten years and has already appeared in court a couple of times. We understand a late August/September return is on the cards.

Unconfirmed reports from several sources suggest that Sunshine Radio from Ludlow, Shropshire will resume transmissions on 1035 khz. now that the Home Office have dropped plans for community radio. The initial plan is to broadcast at weekends only, they will gauge the level of DTI interest from this and then make a decision about increasing their output.

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## Greg Bance

In part one of our interview with Greg he discussed his first few radio jobs with the British offshore pirates of the sixties and his subsequent work on Radio Northsea International which ended when he was sacked by the management for a variety of somewhat trivial reasons....

Mark:- So when you were dismissed by RNI that ended your long association with offshore radio ?

Greg:- I certainly haven't worked on any other radio ships but I still retain an interest in the whole subject. I recently went to a Caroline Movement convention in London which was fun. I still listen to the stations, it's a unique kind of radio with a special atmosphere, a certain magic, which can achieve musically and professionally something that ILR can't. For some reason, once you legitimise something like that it loses all the magic. I was sad when Northsea, Atlantis and Veronica closed in August 1974. There were marches and rallies against the Dutch Government passing the Marine Offences Act but they didn't really achieve much and only Caroline soldiered on (you can see a leaflet for the British

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Free Radio Association/Free Radio Campaign march above. About a 1000 people attended). Mark:- Can you bring your story upto date with a brief look at what you've done since 1973 ?

Greg:- After I left Radio Northsea International I went to work at the biscuit factory ! I think most ILR presenters worked for the United Biscuits Network at some point during their career, UBN was the training ground for all Roger Scott clones - if you could speak with an affected lisp you were in ! In fact, when I joined UBN Roger was just leaving to go to Capital Radio in London. I was probably one of the station's shortest serving presenters, they had a very brisk, no waffle music format and I still hadn't got over my chattering phase. Also, I couldn't get used to the fact there was no transmitter. It wasn't broadcasting, it was narrowcasting via wires, and I suppose I was taking liberties because I couldn't regard it seriously. I got fired from there too, that was two in a row ! After that, between late '73 and late '75, I did freelancing and most of that was voice over work for commercials and television. Then I joined Radio Orwell in Ipswich, spent four and a half years there, and the first two years were quite good fun. The rest of the time was really wasted, I'm not the ideal candidate for Independent Local Radio and I don't think my particular style fitted in with what Orwell were trying to do and achieve. I felt somewhat restricted and, as I say, the last two and a half years dragged. I think what kept me going for the first part of my stint was the great team, we had a lot of other offshore deejays on the staff and they had a marvellous attitude towards radio. After leaving Orwell I was back on the freelance train, I worked for 2 CR in Bournemouth and Beacon Radio in Wolverhampton. I also got back to doing lots and lots of voice overs. It's a nice way to make a living, you can more or less pick and choose what you want to do, when you want to do it. It means you haven't really got time to become bored with something and it suits me down to the ground.

You can catch up with first part of this interview in Free Radio Waves 5 which is still available for 80p from P.O. Box 539, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 4RE. Cheques payable to B.F. Johnston ONLY please.